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**CALLS TO SERVICE**





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*Sermons*



# CALLS TO SERVICE

BEING SERMONS AND ADDRESSES DELIVERED  
IN THE DIOCESE OF LONDON

BY

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I.  
CHRIST AND THE PEOPLE.



# 1.

## CHRIST AND THE PEOPLE.

(*Westminster Abbey, Rogation Sunday, 1 May, 1910.*)

“To the poor the gospel is preached.”—St. Luke vii. 22.

“The common people heard Him gladly.”—St. Mark xii. 37.

THE proclamation of Christ, and the response of the people. “The common people heard Him gladly.” We are not surprised that they should; for the common people have never rejected Christ. It is true that “He was despised and rejected of men,” it is true that “He came to His own, and His own received Him not”; still the masses never rejected Christ. They have rejected some who claimed, as they thought falsely, to represent Him; they have rejected or ignored organizations, which, set up in His Name, did not seem to reflect His Spirit; (this explains the failure of some forms of organized Religion, to reach the hearts of the people) but they have never rejected Christ. Whenever Christ has been held up before them in the beauty of His Life and Death, His Example and His Teaching, they have never rejected Him.

This cannot always be said of others than they. “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord and against His

anointed." The Pharisees and scribes, and their representatives in every age, set themselves against Him; the so-called "upper classes"—though sometimes only apparently—quietly ignored Him. It was not the voice of the people, but the voice of their rulers, which thundered out His condemnation; it was not the hands of the people, but the hands of the men who saw the control of the people slipping from their grasp, which were raised against Him. It has sometimes been said that the same voices which cried "Hosanna" one day, cried "Crucify Him" the next; but I do not know that there is any substantial ground for that assertion. I believe, as a matter of fact, that the people—the masses—when they have acted freely and been true to their best instincts, have never rejected Christ.

He did not expect that they would; twice at least He assumed their ready reception of Himself. On the threshold of His Ministry, when in the synagogue He takes up the roll to read the lesson from the Prophet; while all eyes are fixed on Him, and all are hanging spell-bound on His words, clear and strong sounds the key-note of His Mission: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. . . ." When the Baptist lies in his prison cell, all evidence of his eyes denied him, the longings of his Jewish heart unsatisfied, and there rises in him that perplexity and cold fear which leads him to send to Jesus and ask, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?"—a vital question for the poor prisoner, and a vital question for the world at large—the answer comes, pointing to the different aspects of the Work of Christ, emphasizing what its



great, wide grasp on life was to mean, reaching its climax in the words, "To the poor the gospel is preached".

To that proclamation there could be only one response; for remember (a) *He lived the life of the people*. He chose to live it; all sections of society were open to Him from which to choose, and He chose to live the life of the common people. He lived their life, He championed their wrongs, He shared their work, His heart burned at their oppressions, He thundered His woes on their oppressors; He made His home and formed His friendships among them, His Disciples were men of the people. Son of a village girl, born in a stable, cradled in a manger, brought up in a workman's house, He was one of the people. He was no paid agitator, no professional stirrer up of strife; He gave no monopoly of blessing to poverty, poured no contempt on riches; He taught how to abound as well as how to be abased; He knew the possibilities of each state, the perils of each; He did not think His Mission exhausted by pitying the poor and abusing the rich, but all the same He was one of the people. "Lord of heaven and earth," one with His Eternal Father, yet He was one with the people. Their food was His food, He was clothed as they were, He led the homeless existence of some of them, He provoked the cry (which would certainly be heard on one side or another if He came to London to-day), "He is only a carpenter, a man of the people!" And in response, the heart of the masses beat back in answer to His call and "The common people heard Him gladly".

My friends, that will always be the response to every

life modelled on His Life. The Church must be one with the people, live their life, share their interests, study their problems, distinctly and not only on paper echo the cry, "He hath sent me to preach the gospel to the poor". She must live with the people, move when they move, not follow but precede them, and take her place among them; and that, thanks to the Bishop of London's Fund, is what she is trying to do in London. For instance, owing to the wonderful transformation of London, multitudes are now being swept out, cleared out of Central London, to settle in the North and West. Two years ago the vicar of a small quiet parish of three thousand souls came to tell me that some brick-fields in his neighbourhood had just been sold for building purposes, and that in three years time the population would probably be increased by fifteen thousand. Eight thousand of those fifteen thousand are there already, but thanks to the Bishop of London's Fund, a Church, a Parsonage, and a Parish Hall bear witness to the people that the Church is one with them, and in consequence "the common people" hear her "gladly".

(b) It was not only that Christ lived for the people, *He worked for them, He pitied them, His Heart went out to their sorrows and their sufferings*. What force was there behind that great miracle, a parable (as it was) of social reform, a rebuke to faithlessness, proclaiming the sufficiency of human resources if used for the sake of humanity and in the Name of God? What lay behind that? The Character, Life, and Power of One Who cared, pitied, had compassion in His Heart for the multitude. It was not only the force of His Teaching, scattering their prejudices, breaking down the barriers

of unbelief, but the force of His Compassion. He was the first who ever lived with the single object, to help and comfort the common people; is it strange that they "heard Him gladly"?

That is the secret of the influence of the Church, and it is the lack of it, the apparent lack of it, owing to timidity in grappling with problems which go deep into the life and involve the interests of another class, and the want of faith and venture, which has so often cost the Church of England dear, the people holding aloof, because they are not certain that the Church cares. My friends, heart-hunger is a feeling beside which all other feelings fail. The heart of the people is a very tender heart, it is touched by the knowledge that the Church thinks, feels, and cares. When the Church goes to the people and, by the help of the Bishop of London's Fund, plants a Church among them (often the only beautiful object amidst rows of monotonous little houses); when she builds a Parish Hall into which to gather the children, and starts clubs for young men and women; and when she sends men and women who will be everything to the people—men who will learn to say, "I understand the people and they understand me," then "The common people" hear her "gladly".

(c) Christ lived the life of the people, He cared for the people and *He spoke in the language of the people*. What language it was, beautiful, mysterious, with a depth and immortality about it—"My words shall never pass away"—yet homelike and familiar, in keeping with their thoughts, feelings, and ways. He spoke of fishing to the men of the coast towns, of sowing to the inhabitants of the agricultural villages, of their house-

holds to the women, of the harvest to the peasants to whom it meant so much. It was a strange yet simple language, dignified and reverent; there was no suggestion of vulgarizing the Gospel or bringing it down to the level of the people; it was plain and elastic (a net, not a piece of machinery), unchanging in its truths, but varied in its methods and forms.

The Church must speak in the language of the people. We talk with pride and thankfulness (I wish it were with more thankfulness than pride) of what we call our incomparable Liturgy, our unrivalled Book of Common Prayer. Certainly no English Churchman is likely to question the value of the devotions which have come down to us covered by the dust of centuries, hallowed by the voices of the past, consecrated by the use of generations of men, which remind us of the unchanging links with bygone days. But it is impossible to feel that those devotions exhaust, or even touch, the needs of the people, that the language is intelligible to them. They assume a spiritual standard not always reached by regular Churchgoers, and are couched in an unknown tongue as far as many others are concerned. I often wonder what would be the result of a Catechetical Instruction given to a West End congregation on the familiar expressions and phraseology of the Prayer Book; what then about the masses? I honestly believe, that to a large number the words—time-worn and beautiful as they are, and for all their uplifting memories—are not in the least understood. The Evangelistic work of the Diocese, supported by the Bishop of London's Fund, does just this. It combines elasticity of method and simplicity of language; it is not conventional in its



methods, it is not conventional in the places it chooses for its services, nor the hours when they are held. It goes everywhere—into Halls, Theatres, Music Halls, Parks, Streets—it uses the simplest language, offers unwritten prayers, sings hymns not afraid to be called frankly revivalistic. So while Prayer-Book revision, on points non-controversial but which closely touch the evangelization of the people, seems as far away as ever, the Church goes up and down among the people treating them (as they are) like spiritual children, and leading them gently to the Feet of Christ.

(d) “The common people heard Him gladly” for another reason, because *He recognized the true value of humanity*, that in man as man—not in the conditions of his life, the accidents of birth and fortune—does the true value of humanity lie. “What is man?” He did not answer as the world does to-day, “So much wealth, so much talent, so much social importance, political influence, ecclesiastical position”; but, “Man is a soul”. That is the answer of Christ. Man is a separate, single, indestructible person, a soul, which in the balance of God outweighs all else, the one essential amidst all that is incidental and accidental, and it cannot profit him if he gain the whole world and lose that in which the secret of his value lies. Is that the usual measurement of value in London? I think there cannot be much doubt about the answer. When we ask what a man is worth, we mean what is his balance at the bank. Christ means a man’s character, his deathless soul; that is what he is worth.

The Church has to grasp the problems of the masses, and to care for the individual; and she must never for-

get the one in the other. It has been said that the Love of God is like the ocean which reflects the sun not only on the broad bosom of its waters, but in every tiny wavelet that touches the shore ; it is universal and individual. The Church exists to reflect that Love, not only among the masses but to the individual, touching one life here and there, brightening and winning one soul ; and only through the individual can she touch the individual. It is the personal touch that matters. We are in danger nowadays of an idolatry of numbers, we live in crowds and we are apt to think in crowds ; but the Church must go after one lost soul "until she find it". The building is important, but the living agent is more important ; he must be there before the Church and before the Parish Hall ; and the Bishop of London's Fund lays the foundation and also puts the crown on its work, when it supports a whole army of men going out with the message of hope on their lips (which the world wants to-day more than ever before). "No man cared for my soul," that is the cry of the man who is waiting for some one (and if you cannot go, you can help to send that some one) to reach him, hold out a helping hand and set him on his feet again. It is the cry of some fallen woman who believes that no pure woman will touch her now ; she is waiting for some one (and if you cannot go yourself, help the Church to send some one) to lift her and make her realize that she is not beyond the pale, but the very one Christ is looking for.

The universal, the individual—that is the glory of Christ's work. Help the Bishop of London's Fund to make it the glory of the Church of England in London ;

and I know (for who can doubt it) that, not because of her historic traditions and favoured position, but because she shows to the people the Spirit of Christ Who is in her, "The common people will hear her gladly".



II.

THE GREAT GULF.



## II.

### THE GREAT GULF.

(*Holy Trinity, Kensington Gore, 1911.*)

“Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed.”—St. Luke, xvi. 26.

It is of the modern interpretation of the Saviour's words that I invite you to think to-day. Of no parable is His declaration more wonderfully true: “My words shall never pass away”. For in its main features and warnings the story is constantly and vividly before us. Under the contrasted circumstances and conditions of modern life, there is only one thing to be said, that between men and men of equal value in God's sight “there is a great gulf fixed”.

That it is true of social distinctions and material prosperity is of course the most commonplace fact, and yet it is a fact that for those on one side of the gulf is by no means easy to grasp. The exercise of imagination is not a favourite English process. We pride ourselves on being the most practical people in the world, and have almost succeeded in persuading ourselves that the imaginative and the practical are contradictory terms. It is not easy in the West End, in the glare and glitter of life, when immersed in

spending or making money or helping others to do so, to look across the gulf and realize what is passing on the other side. And yet the fact remains that the contrast of the Saviour's story is a modern contrast. Never perhaps was there expenditure more lavish or luxury more exaggerated, extravagant, and pronounced than we are familiar with just now. Thousands tossed away on an evening's entertainment, £23,000 spent last week on a picture, £3000 on a ring—a great stream of wealth pouring itself forth, not on luxuries which mean the employment of the many, but simply the enrichment or amusement of the few. All this on one side, all the stir and brightness and beauty of a London season at its height; and then on the other side, close to it, almost touching it, the toiling thousands with their dull grey lives, if nothing worse, seeing it but unseen by it, looking with extraordinary patience and indomitable cheerfulness across the "great gulf fixed".

I think it desirable to remind you, a West End congregation, that within fifteen minutes drive of this church in one direction, there are families of six living in a single room, and within the same distance in another direction, parents and little children living in basement dwellings reeking with damp, under housing conditions which, however improved, are still hardly fit for human habitations—sickness and health huddled together, life and death in ghastly contact—one-roomed habitations serving for sleeping, eating, sick-room, and mortuary; and all this, not far away from you in some remote region with which you have no acquaintance, but at your doors, in full sight of your comfortable homes.

We probably as a body do not believe in the extreme



Socialistic propaganda, we have no faith in a class war, we do not think we have exhausted our duty when we have pitied the poor and abused the rich. But for all that the fact remains; and to ignore it, to refuse to look at it, to pass it by flippantly, to dismiss it with a contemptuous phrase, is to do more than anything to justify the wild schemes which we condemn. The point of the parable is not the contrast between poverty and riches (that is assumed, it is as old as society itself); it is not the wealth of Dives which is condemned, or the poverty of Lazarus which is extolled—the point is the attitude which you and I assume towards it. Whether we see it or not, whether we think of or regard it or not, the question is: Are we narrowing or widening the “great gulf fixed”?

The pity of it is that it is true not only socially and materially, but religiously and spiritually, that between the conditions under which men’s highest interests are cared for, their characters formed, their life here and hereafter shaped and guided, and the conditions of the lives of other men, “there is a great gulf fixed”. That is the most perplexing part of the social problem, of the divisions which mark off men from men. It is not the inequality of money, but the inequality of opportunity; it is not a question of full or empty purses, of luxurious or poverty-stricken homes—no schemes yet devised would, we believe, prevent the recurrence to some extent of those conditions—but it is a question of religious opportunities and spiritual chances. Surely it is an amazing fact that in the religious world, in the sacred province of the Church of God, in the opportunities for Worship, the consolations of Religion, the story holds

good—luxury and penury, thousands without the crumbs of Religion that fall from the tables of the others. It is bad when the Lazarus of material poverty lies at our gate; it is not less bad when the Lazarus of spiritual want is starving in sight of those wrapped in the fine linen of spiritual privilege; that in the Church of God where rich and poor meet together “there is a great gulf fixed”.

It is my lot to have worked as a Bishop for more than ten years over an area containing more souls than almost any English Diocese, more populous than some four English Dioceses rolled together, an extraordinarily varied and fascinatingly interesting sphere—and both sides of the gulf are continually before me. I was Confirming a few nights ago in a parish of ten thousand artisans in which the wealthiest person was earning thirty shillings a week, with a beautiful Church and a Parish Hall owing everything to the Fund you are asked to support, and where two men are struggling, and struggling in vain, with the needs of that vast population. I think as I stand here of new districts of London, inhabited by those who have been driven out from the centre, whether by County Council improvements for the good of the community, or by landlord improvements for the good of themselves, where in little bare iron buildings the ground is being held for the Church amongst teeming populations. I know place after place where only by ingenious devices and with an anxiety which is breaking down good men before my eyes, can the working expenses of the Parish be met. And then I come to the other part of my Division—Belgravia, Mayfair, Kensington—and I find richly ornate churches, crowded with beautiful gifts,

which witness to love for the House of God and a desire to give of the best for His service. It is all good—there is no room for echoes of the Judas' cry. It is based upon the conception of a higher utility than we allow for in our reckonings as to what is useful, and yet if we are not looking across the gulf, the strong bearing the burdens of the weak, it is not good. "There is a great gulf fixed."

What is the remedy? There is only one—that each should help to build a bridge across the gulf. It is useless to condemn the schemes, crude and impossible as they often are, that are found in the Socialistic propaganda. The question is, What are we doing ourselves to bridge the gulf? Are we in any sense—in the highest sense—bearing one another's burdens; or are we not? It is a tremendous question, for it means the test of our discipleship, our Churchmanship, our Christianity. Are we helping to build a bridge across the gulf? To-day the question takes a concrete form. I claim for the great Fund for which I plead that it is doing the best social as well as the best religious work. Every Church it builds is a centre of fellowship, a bond of brotherhood, every parsonage house radiates sympathy, every mission building is giving the masses of the people a wider and more vivid conception of what the Church is. The mere fact of these things reveals the Church answering the cry of a toiling, suffering, often joyless humanity, "Carest Thou not that we perish"? The parochial life of the Church of England redeems the Church from the appearance of an indifference to the sorrows of the people that has alienated thousands. In these ways the Church is doing what more ambitious schemes cannot do to bridge the gulf.

In that work of bridge-building I ask you to take your part. What are the planks of which the bridge is composed? What are the beams of which all of us can say, "Let us take every man a beam," and try to build the house of the social system on broader, stronger lines? It cannot be God's will that any children of His should be living in degradation and misery—with little hope here and none hereafter. "Let us take every man a beam." Let us build the bridge. What are the planks?

(a) *Knowledge*.—It is mutual ignorance that is keeping the classes apart and widening the gulf of social conditions and religious opportunities. The rich know but little of the lives of the poor. The poor, thanks to newspaper revelations, know too much in a sense, and yet too little of the lives of the rich. Abuse of the one and contempt of the other will never bridge the gulf. It is just this the Church in London should be doing, putting before London a big map of itself, revealing its real conditions, removing the ignorance of London for which London people are remarkable, disclosing the fact that but for the quiet work of unknown men whose names never appear in newspaper paragraphs, whole districts would be spiritual deserts without a thought or reminder of God. It is an enormous boon that it should do this. It is enough to earn the gratitude of all who care for their city, respect their Church and fear their God, when they realize what a Christless London this would be without such effort. The first plank is that of knowledge.

(b) *Sympathy*.—It is bad not to know; it is worse to know and not to care. Nothing but sympathy—the knowledge that others care—can solve the social prob-

lem, bridge the social gulf; nothing but the living touch of living men, amongst whom I claim a large place for that army of Clergy, laymen, and laywomen, whom the Bishop of London's Fund sends out to live amongst the people and witness to the fact that the Church cares for the people. There is nothing like that for bridging the great gulf. It is the personal touch that counts. If you could see the joy and thankfulness when the tidings come to a poor Parish that the Fund has voted money to build a Church or a large Parish Hall, or as a grant for an additional Curate; if you could see the sadness and depression that settle down on a place when the Fund has been compelled to refuse help, because the richest Church in the richest city in the world is stinting and starving it; I am certain you would feel no words too strong in which to bring home to the heart of the West End the tremendous claim these efforts have upon it.

(c) The third plank is *Character*—we can give that. Better conditions and better men, act and react upon each other. When General Booth interviewed Cecil Rhodes in South Africa, Rhodes described his great schemes for Imperial expansion, and then Booth told of his schemes and plans for the improvement of men. When he had finished, Rhodes said: "You have the best of it. I am busy trying to make a larger Empire, you to make better men". And that is what the Fund is doing. It is building Churches and Parish Halls which mean so much to the people; but above all in financing the Evangelistic work of the Diocese it is sending the message of the Gospel—trying by the grace of God to do what Rhodes described as "making better men".

(d) The largest and strongest plank across the gulf is and must be *Religion*. To leave that out is to leave everything out. As Archbishop Temple said in one of those rugged sentences of his, which will live after the utterances of most of us are forgotten: "If you make people religious, in time you will make them everything else". It is the key to the problem of the lives of the people, and they know it and want it. When they migrate as they are doing in thousands from the centre of London to the Western and Northern outskirts, material improvements follow them—schools, hospitals, working men's dwellings, sanitation—is the Church, the National Church, which only has the right to call herself National, if she is creating and answering the highest aspirations of the nation, to be the one thing which does not follow them? They want something, to do what these other things cannot do; in weakness and suffering, in life and death, some voice to speak to them of the things that matter most. When the Church stands in the midst of the people everything is different; there is a new atmosphere in the place, a new look on the faces of the people. The Church is a home, the parson a friend. "The common people heard Him gladly," gladly because He told them what these men, and others, with us though not perhaps exactly of us, in His Name are endeavouring to tell them—that one thing is needful, one thing indispensable. They are pointing them to the One Figure linking rich and poor, ever stretching out His Hands to both across the "great gulf".

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III.

THE LIBERTY OF SERVICE.





### III.

#### THE LIBERTY OF SERVICE.

*(Hon. Artillery Company Parade Service, St. Botolph,  
Bishopsgate, 28 June, 1908.)*

“The Son of God Who . . . gave Himself.”—Galatians II. 20.

So St. Paul describes the greatest act of Self-sacrifice the world has ever known. Every act of self-surrender, every deed of heroism, every life which because it saved others was powerless to save itself is but a faint reflection of that supreme Self-sacrifice. “He gave Himself,” it was the voluntariness of the act that made its glory. Other features stood out beautiful and clear—it was undeserved, “He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth”; it was patient, “He opened not His mouth”. It was all this but much more; it was spontaneous, with no sort of compulsion about it, the free outcome of an absolutely unselfish, unstinting devotion. “He gave Himself.”

“Who gave Himself.” Notice how all His Life was coloured with the voluntariness which made the glory of His Death. You remember how, when our Lord had rivetted the attention of the people by that parable which sketched His earthly Life—I go before My sheep, I know My sheep, I lay down My life for My sheep—

when all is done, and the story told, He reverts to the central act: "I lay down My life. . . . No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself". There is no evidence of weakness here, but the evidence of power; there is no trace of compulsion, just a splendid voluntariness: "No man taketh it".

You remember also, how in the crisis of His Life He expresses the same idea again. He is in the Garden of Gethsemane, the armed crowd come to arrest Him, the impulsive Disciple has drawn his sword—"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" And as He speaks, the vision floats up before Him. He feels the grip on His wrists, but the air is thick with angels hurrying to His relief; He hears the Father's Voice commanding His release; He sees the swords flashing round His head; He is free, triumphant; it only needs one word, and that word is trembling on His lips. But the next moment he waves it all aside, He cannot do it, the price is too great; it means the surrender of the voluntariness which makes the glory of sacrifice. He has the power to escape, but He will not avail Himself of it; He has the power to lay down His Life and He will use it; so He steps out to shame and death. Yes, in His Life, but supremely in His Death, in the fullest, completest sense, He gave Himself, from the moment when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will!" until He marched forward as a conqueror to His willing Sacrifice.

The grandeur of voluntariness makes the real power and glory of all human life. Compulsions, of course, there must be, we cannot escape from them, we must

face them. The compulsion of duty—that word which some think so hard, but which has been softened and illumined ten thousand times over by deeds which spell the triumph of voluntariness. The compulsion of habit—when we find ourselves slaves in the fetters our own folly or weakness have forged. The compulsion of circumstances—money, temperament, earthly calling—those things to which all men in their different ways are obliged to submit. We all know them, we are all conscious of them, we all sometimes rebel against them. It is like the ship fretting her sides against the wharf, instead of being out on the ocean, free and untrammelled. But the strong moment, the glorious moment in life, is when a man looks these compulsions in the face, feels their grip upon him, hears at the same time the rustle of the wings of the reasons and excuses which might release him, and turns and says: “No, I am free in spite of—nay because of—them, free in will, in spirit, in resolve! I can do without this, I can deny myself that, I will respond, though it be at the cost of my earthly prosperity, to the demands my country makes upon my time; because I *will*, ‘I give myself’”.

What lay behind, what inspired the voluntariness which made the glory of our Lord’s Sacrifice? “He loved me and so He gave Himself for me.” It was love, and duty inspired by love. There was a work which had to be done, a deliverance to be accomplished, a Kingdom to be inaugurated, a King Whose honour and glory were to be proclaimed. This is why He “gave Himself”. So, in a lesser sense, it ever is with us; when a man gives himself, the voluntariness of Christ’s Life becomes in a small measure his own. There is a power

urging and pressing him on. It may be love of home; for that a man will toil year in and year out, denying himself the pleasure and rest which others have, because there is ever before him the vision of a home and a woman and a little child. It may be love of country. "England wants me," he says, and it is enough; the England that represents so much, with its wealth of tradition, its inspiring memories, its procession of historic figures, its ascendancy among the nations. Or it may be love of God. He hears another call. "God wants me—amazing though it is that He should, knowing all about me, knowing what I am, He wants me, the contribution of my influence, which may turn the scale in the circle where I live." When a man hears the call of home, country, God, everything that is good in him springs up to answer to it, and he gives *himself*.

My brothers, it is voluntariness which makes the strength and glory of the movement in the front of which our Regiment has stood so long. Some people think we are within a short distance of compulsory military service in this country—it is not my business to discuss that, nor is this the place—but if ever it comes, then whatever gains to the nation may come with it (and though experts alone can decide that question, some of us are confident that the gains will be enormous), still there will undoubtedly be loss of that voluntariness which always makes for strength and glory. For voluntariness goes deep into English life and character. Gladly, freely, often at serious inconvenience and cost to himself, a man gives the whole of himself—the strength of his body, the powers of his mind, the affection, devotion, and loyalty of his heart—to a cause; and

when he does, what is his reward? *The joy of sacrifice*, not the joy which follows and results from it, but joy in the very act of doing it, joy even in the drudgery which must accompany work, joy in submitting to inconvenience and deprivation of amusement—for joy is the reward of the man who gives himself.

You remember how Tennyson says of Enoch Arden, after his resolution not to claim his wife and home:—

“ He was not all unhappy—his resolve  
Upbore him, and firm faith and evermore  
Prayer from a living source within the will,  
And beating up through all the bitter past  
Like fountains of sweet waters in the sea,  
Kept him a living soul,”

because he had given himself.

Wherever duty is, there is joy—you know it as well as I. Wherever foliage is, a man knows water must be near, though he hears no ripple of a stream, and the trees seem to grow out of the sand; so he knows that in surrender lies the possibility of joy. Happiness consists in giving up, it is seldom found in keeping; there is a joy in sacrifice with which no other human joy can compare. To miss that is to miss that which makes life worth living. Our Regiment and the system of which it forms a part in this country are illustrating that truth.

“ He went away grieved,” so it is written of the young man described by Dante as he who made the great mistake. No wonder he went away grieved, for he had missed the secret of gladness, missed the joy of giving. Against that picture of the sad retreating figure—and it is always sad when a man turns a deaf ear to a call and

retreats in the presence of a great opportunity ; when a man turns his back on his country or his God—against that picture, I place, I leave with you, as the ideal of all voluntary effort and free self-sacrifice, as the illustration of the brilliant results the voluntary effort which reflects it will produce, the vision of Him, “The Son of God Who . . . gave Himself”.

IV.

THE ALPHABET OF SERVICE.





#### IV.

### THE ALPHABET OF SERVICE.

(*Service for Church workers in the Archdeaconry of Middlesex. St. Paul's Cathedral, 26 February, 1906.*)

"They first gave their own selves to the Lord."—2 Corinthians VIII. 5.

"WHAT mean ye by this service?" so in old days they used to ask of a Service which they could not understand, and it is quite possible some of us may be asking what we mean to-night by the first of what we hope may be an annual opportunity for refreshment and inspiration. It is good for us to be here; but *why?* What is the meaning of this Service for Workers, all gathered out of the Archdeaconry of Middlesex, but who come from such different surroundings, whose work is carried on under such varied conditions? When—from prosperous parts of the West End, from old Parish Churches with historic names, from new outlying suburbs, from river-side places with their dangers and difficulties, and quiet Middlesex villages still remote from London—you all come here to join in united Prayer and Praise, and listen to the words of one whose only claim to speak is that he is one of you and spends his life among you,

is it not natural and well to ask, What mean ye by this Service?

Very simply and plainly I will try to answer that question to-night. Other voices, in other years, will no doubt speak to you of the deeper principles of Christian service; so I will confine myself now to what we hope, and what in our minds and our prayers we intend to be the meaning of this Service.

(a) First it will be a great and sorely needed bond of union. There is a terrible isolation in London Church work, a terrible loneliness for the Church worker; so it is good to be first reminded of the source of our power, of what at once inspires the work and unites the workers, so that however far apart we may be, in all our widely different work, we may still be true to the great ideal of Christian brotherhood, still in the inner circle realize the Master's Prayer, "That they all may be one" and believe in and use the only power which can really make us one.

I remember once seeing at the head of a report of a great crusade carried on by one of the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland against a gigantic social evil, the words, "Prayer has been in the forefront of our movement". The report was a splendid record of useful work, it pulsated with reality, labour, sacrifice; and at the head of it was the secret of it—Prayer—not as an appendix to the movement, but in the forefront of it all. So we began our service just now with a solemn Litany, an act of common pleading; so we declared our Faith in the Creed; so we joined in that mutual intercession which can alone keep London workers one. That means so much for the worker himself; for "the Lord

turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friend ". That means so much for the work, because it bridges divisions, crushes selfishness, relieves loneliness, rises superior to death, brings the ablest Church worker into touch with the lowliest helper in the Diocese.

Yes, and more than that, Prayer as a destructive power breaks down the barrier of parochialism, that exaggerated congregationalism which is the bane of London work, and against which I implore you to set your faces as a flint. As a constructive power it lifts us out of our rut, shows us other work and other workers, sends us from our knees to care for and be interested in the work of others. Prayer does more than sweep away selfishness, parochialism, self-absorption; it is constructive because it inspires us with the sense that, whoever we are, we are one body, one glorious fellowship; that whether on one side or the other of the curtain of death we are "Workers together with God".

Prayer in the forefront—we all work; do we all pray? Prayer and work should be always intertwined, blended, like the mingled smoke of the sacrifice and the cloud of incense going up to heaven. The Bishop of London told us to-day of a man who, often, instead of pleading with souls spent his time praying for them. And what a pleading that was (some of us know), wrestling sometimes on his knees, sometimes walking up and down his room, remembering each by name, spreading out their needs before God. Is that our plan when we are disappointed, discouraged, in despair, tempted to throw up our work; do we betake ourselves to prayer, and do our people know it because they feel the spiritual power that through it comes to them?

You have heard of the little fishing village, where, on a stormy night, in the church upon the cliff, the Priest rings the bell and then kneels in the church in prayer for "those in peril on the sea"? Can you not imagine what it means to those out in the storm, and to the weeping, watching women at home? Do you pray for your people, for the children, for the boys of the Brigade? Think what it may mean to some young tempted soul—in the fires of temptation and longing to keep himself unsinged—to hear the bell and know that you are on your knees.

That is one lesson of the opening Litany, and another is its reminder of the great force behind work and Prayer, the secret of power, the unity of the Spirit, the communion of the Holy Ghost, one body, one Spirit, one grand commission. "Hear us, Holy Spirit"! so our cry went up to Him Who is praying in what is, to us, the unintelligible language of Heaven. We remember what He is, we call on Him to work in our Parish, in ourselves. It is a declaration of our absolute and utter dependence on the Holy Ghost.

More than that, it is the rebuke of materialistic methods of Church work, the secret of the uplifting and spiritualizing of our hopes, our work, our plans. The Holy Ghost is behind our Creed, no one "can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost"; behind our work, however apparently trivial and secular, behind our selves, our regrets, resolves, blessings, warnings, sparks of enthusiasm—behind all is the Fire only waiting to be stirred into action. "Fire on the earth." "I believe in the Holy Ghost"—do we? Are there not some among us who "have not so much as heard whether

there be any Holy Ghost"? Let this be our prayer spoken out of the weakness of our faith in the Holy Ghost, "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief".

(b) Secondly we mean by this Service a solemn inspection of our work, a searching of the sacrifice, a mending of the nets. In old days the priest inspected the sacrifice scrupulously, with reverent awe, lest a spotted thing should be laid on the Altar of the All-Holy God. Christian service comes near its Ideal, just so far as now and then we pause and look it over and say, "We must not, we dare not, offer a spotted sacrifice". There are the torn meshes in the net, the bit of self—the self-assertion, self-love, self-complacency—which sometimes mars the beauty of the work; the miserable jealousy of another worker, the grasping spirit, the love of power, the passion to be first. Is it not well, in God's sight, before God's Altar, by the power and light of the Holy Ghost, solemnly, humbly, yet hopefully, because we know it is His Work and He will help us to cleanse and mend it, to look for spots in the sacrifice, for torn meshes in the nets?

Surely that is no unworthy meaning of this Service. As in the ship the Disciples were serving the Lord and Master, even when sitting down doing dreary commonplace work, plying the needle and mending the nets, so here to-night let us examine our work. Are there no methods which need overhauling to see if they are really fulfilling their purpose? No agencies which reach only a limited number while the masses are outside? No worldliness, lowering not spiritualizing, no noise, ostentation, love of observation and advertisement? How about the constant cry for money—which makes

one sometimes inclined to ask whether it would not be better to do less and require less, rather than risk blunting our spiritual weapons? Or if we consider the worker as the net, how about our own personal relation, our nearness to God, our use of Prayer, Bible reading, Sacrament? It is our *self* that needs the renovating touch of the Power of God, the Grace of God, to set against deterioration in our personal Religion owing to the moral and spiritual gravitation which drags us down. "Mending our nets," is one reason for our being here in the ship of this great Cathedral—with outside the teeming multitudes to whom we have to minister—in order that we may scatter to our various Parishes with our mended nets and say, "I go a fishing!"

What do we mean by this Service? We mean a bond of union, a recognition of the power of Prayer, an opportunity for the inspection of methods and work; but more than all perhaps (*c*) the re-consecration of the worker. That is the alpha and omega of work. From "Lo, I come to do Thy will," at the beginning, to the glorious summing up, "For their sakes I sanctify" and consecrate "My Self," we may trace the beautiful Unselfishness of Christ. It was as much for their sakes that He went apart on the mountain to pray, as that He moved among them teaching and healing. "For their sakes I consecrate myself," that is the source and spring of work, to which St. Paul refers when he says, "They *first* gave their own selves to the Lord". My friends, we cannot reverse that order. "Not yours but you," we say to our people, and God says it to us. God's claim is nothing less than ourselves. It is so easy to forget it, but that is the order and the claim, as His

Eye penetrates past activity, past sacrifice, deep to the fountain-head from which it all springs: "They first gave their own selves to the Lord".

Believe me—nay, you know—it is no rhetoric or empty phrase, but reality. There is the consecration of gifts—each taking our separate endowments, the advantages bestowed on us, so different, and so suited to the different departments of work. "Covet earnestly the best gifts," but the pre-eminence of any gift lies wholly in its use; they are good only when used for others and for God. Fail to deliver your message, and you cannot avoid the nemesis that follows.

"I consecrate *myself*," I give myself to the Lord. The worker's consecration is the measure of his power. You have given yourself—you may not know how, or when, or where, you may be ignorant of the place and time, but you know that everything good in your work springs from that consecration, that giving, those repeated acts of dedication, constantly renewed. The splendid, unselfish measurement of work is its consecration; you give yourself.

So in this Service we are doing this, asserting the reality of our fellowship, recognizing the power of Prayer, inspecting the details of our work, dedicating ourselves afresh to the service of God, but as the climax of it all, (*d*) offering a great tribute of Thanksgiving and praise, "standing upon our feet". Is there not a cause? When I look out on your numbers, and remember that you are only the representatives of the thousands who would have loved to have been here, had there been room for them; when I think of the surrendered wills and dedicated lives, the energies, the gifts, the influence,



the prayer, the stored up grace of the Sacraments, that through God's Goodness is amongst you and within you, I ask, Is there not a cause? The crowning meaning of this Service is the thanksgiving with which it closes. The consecration of ourselves will be at once the cause and the effect of that thanksgiving. I hope before we leave the Cathedral (and what better place and time could there be?) we shall all of us look up to God and say, "Father, for their sakes I consecrate myself". And remember in what sort of spirit it should be done. Not in gloomy constraint or in cold silence. No; when the smoke of the sacrifice ascended to heaven, then the trumpets pealed forth and the voices of the people filled the building; "they rejoiced as they offered". Discouraged, depressed, tired workers, as some of us are, let us throw ourselves with our failures into the Arms of the Lord, praying, "Use me just as Thou wilt, and when and how," and a music will come into the life which was not there before; a new power will inspire the work, and with the sound of the trumpets in our souls, "standing upon our feet" we shall join in the great act of Thanksgiving. For the power of all work lies there. From the beginning of Creation, when the sons of God shouted for joy, until the end of the work of Redemption, when the anthem will sound, "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving . . . be unto our God for ever and ever," this is grandly true. Power efficiency, inspiration, will come into your work, not only when you sit down to mend your nets, but when you stand up to praise your God.

You are here to give thanks to God for all His Mercy, for the power to work at all, for the faintest flash of



Divine encouragement, for a single soul you have been permitted to help, for every child you have taught, every sick person you have visited, every tempted lad you have shielded. "Let us give thanks unto the Lord, for He hath done great things for us already, whereof we are glad." Then on that build the prayer, "Turn our captivity . . . as the rivers in the south". With a mighty burst of confidence, we shall sing directly the closing words of the Te Deum, "In *Thee* have I trusted, let me never be confounded".



V.

THE MEASUREMENTS OF SERVICE.



## V.

### THE MEASUREMENTS OF SERVICE.

*(Church Penitentiary Association, St. Paul's, Knight-bridge, 18 October, 1910.)*

“The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.”  
—Revelations XXI. 16.

THUS St. John describes the Holy City that he saw descending from heaven. One feature of it arrests his attention—not its immensity, not its beauty, but—its wonderful proportions, its even balance, its utter absence of one-sidedness, its perfect symmetry. “The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.”

Was it a parable of the Godhead that he read into that vision?

The length of His eternal Fatherhood—the Ancient of Days, without beginning and without end. And more than His eternal Being, His unchanging Purpose running like a golden cord through history; now hidden, now revealed, but ever there; concealed behind the processes of nature and the movements of the world, until it finds its crowning manifestation in Jesus Christ. The length of God is the Purpose of God. The breadth of the Incarnate Son—reaching out to all, including all, consecrating all; with His boundless Sympathy, un-

wearying effort, inexhaustible tenderness, with a Love which could stoop to the lowest, seek and find the farthest away, with a Power to consecrate all human life and bring a new standard of life and work into the world. The breadth of God is the Incarnate Son. The height of the Spirit—the uplifting, inspiring Power of the Holy Ghost, inbreathing all, ennobling all—was it this Divine vision he saw? The ever-blessed Trinity meeting the world's great needs, with Divine purpose, Divine sympathy and Divine power all evenly balanced. "None is afore or after other: none is greater, or less than another"; "The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

Or was it a human vision that St. John saw? It was a city, and what so human as a city? It is that intense humanity of city life that makes its fascination and its charm, and atones to us for much that is distracting and degrading. Was it a parable of human life that he saw? Its length of purpose redeeming it from a vague indifference, from being the purposeless thing that, here in West London, it often is. Its breadth of sympathy—as deep calls to deep, so human lives are knit together by the common links of sorrow and suffering. Its height of spirituality—the answer to the longing that comes sometimes to every man, to seek the things above, to be free from the influences that drag him down—the consoling, uplifting Power of the Holy Spirit of God. Was it that he saw, human life, its purpose, usefulness, and inspiration—all so beautifully balanced in the Ideal Life? "The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

Or was it the combination of the two, human and

Divine, as they are combined in the system of the Church of God? Human—her Creeds with their great truths couched in human language, her Sacraments with their outward parts drawn from common things, her ministers human agents, her history full of human frailty. And yet Divine—"Her foundations are upon the holy hills". She is the "City of God, the new Jerusalem," of Divine origin and human mission, "come down out of heaven from God".

Then, if so, the vision was a parable of the work of the Church, of the dimensions of Christian service. It suggested what the features of that work should be; and to-day, for a few moments, we may learn from it what are the real tests of that department of Church activities which calls us together this morning, in the Presence of Him in Whose Name the work is done.

First then the length of this work, what is that? It is not its history, not the years through which it has been done, though that is surely something for which to thank God. For more than sixty years this Church Penitentiary Association has witnessed for God by work done in calmness and patience, fulfilling its own conditions of membership, Sacrament, and Service, work which would otherwise have remained undone. For sixty years it has made its protest against the shameful and dishonouring indifference and apathy, the paralysing pessimism that characterizes even professing Christian people with regard to this subject. That is indeed something to give thanks for as we gather at our Eucharist under the auspices of, what for us rescue workers is, "the great mother of us all". But the length of the work is rather the purpose of the work; what is that purpose?

It is a spiritual purpose, not exclusively but inclusively. Its aim is restoration to Christ and His Church, nothing lower, nothing less. It is a national purpose, because it touches the life of the nation. The evil is cutting deep into our national life; every fallen creature is sapping it away, every young life corrupted is a dumb note in the music of the nation. It is a purpose for the nation and it is a purpose for the Church. The Church wants these people and they want her, there is a sense of loss without them. The one sheep in the wilderness, the one dropped coin, the one child far from home, make the pathos of the search. To lift a life from the mire, to open the door for the earning of an honest livelihood, to help a fallen woman to stand on her feet again, to become respectable and self-respecting—that is a good thing, but it does not exhaust the purpose of this work. Permanent amendment, lifelong repentance, the birth of a new hope, the restoration to the Communion of the Church, the certainty that Christ is working for these girls' souls and that you are working with Him—that, and nothing less than that, is the length of Rescue Work.

The breadth of it—what is that? Certainly in one terrible sense it has breadth. It is so far-reaching, so penetrating, it witnesses to such a widespread evil, touching every class, breaking down every social barrier, complicated by the other social evils with which it is intertwined. But it is broad in another sense—with human sympathy and human tenderness. It is broad in its methods, patient, thoughtful, intelligent, varied; with the constant remembrance that such work as this must never be too rigid, never shrink from new ventures



of faith, new experiments in work, new—perhaps less rigid—discipline, brighter and more encouraging surroundings, the workers in look and manner illustrating the hope without which one can never lift a fallen life. That is the breadth of Rescue Work.

What is the height of it? Well, we must witness to the height which should be the dominating feature of our work—the “Power from on high,” on which we rely. We often feel helpless and disappointed; although we know the Grace of God is so strong, we feel so weak. That is why we are here to-day spreading the whole work before the Throne, consecrating ourselves, our purposes and our methods once more to His service, pleading by His Sacrifice for those who are so precious, because they cost Him His Blood. Our prayer, offered in unison with His Pleadings, is that God may stir the hearts and consciences of those who stand aloof in helplessness and indifference from this Christ-like work. Let us also pray that we may be penitent with those who are penitent, grieve over our own sins as we ask them to grieve over theirs; ask for some of the courage of the surrender which we claim from them, when we turn them from a life of excitement to the order and discipline of a Penitents’ Home; that this may be our constant prayer: “O give me the comfort of Thy help again, and stablish me with Thy free spirit,” and this our resolution: “Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee”.



VI.  
THE GOAL OF SERVICE.



## VI.

### THE GOAL OF SERVICE.

*(Mothers' Union Annual Service, St. Paul's Cathedral,  
1 June, 1910.)*

"In the midst of the throne . . . a Lamb as it had been slain."  
—Revelations v. 6.

THERE is only one subject on which it is possible for me to address you this morning—the subject that the Service suggests. The great Sacrament speaks to you with unrivalled eloquence of the thoughts which fill your minds concerning the different aspects of your work. How many-sided the Sacrament is! Glorious in its simplicity and directness, rich in meaning, touching our poor human lives and experiences at so many different points of contact, we do not wonder that round it so many things should centre. It has been said that the "Sacraments are extensions of the Incarnation"; if so, they must reflect the many-sided beauty of the Incarnate Life.

What do we mean by this Service? Apart from its essential meaning, what special teaching has it for us? Why should our first act be to gather round the throne of the Lamb that once was slain? In answer to that question, I submit to you that the aspects of the Holy

Mysteries suggest the aspect of progress in your work, and the thoughts about it which should be yours.

(a) It is an Eucharist, a great offering of Thanksgiving. Your *Te Deum* is heartfelt; behind the ringing sounds of the *Gloria* is the sense of the mercy of God outpoured on your work. Is there not a call to your Union to "stand upon your feet"? God has a special blessing for the thankful spirit; for the man or the movement that returns to give thanks there is a double benediction. Other attitudes there are—the attitude of humiliation; on your knees confessing the failures, the defects, the pettiness of spirit, the intrusions of self, the spots that spoil your sacrifice. The attitude of restfulness; sitting down to gather up strength in the pauses and breaks which are so necessary; the indignant repudiation of the notion that you are doing nothing unless you are going somewhere. The attitude of progress; "running the race, walking in the Spirit," in response to the instinct in your heart that cries: "The place is too strait for us, let us take every man a beam". But before every other, because essential to every other, is the attitude of thanksgiving, standing on your feet, thrilled with a sense of God's mercy.

Is there not a cause, a reason, for thanksgiving? For the vision that dawned, not forty years ago; for the work that followed the vision; for wonderful progress, steady advance, flashes of encouragement, unruffled harmony; for the workers who have gone to their rest, whom we remember to-day before God, and for those who are toiling still; is there not cause for thanksgiving, room for an Eucharist? It is well to force yourselves to look back, to ask the history of your

movement, to consider the progress of your Union, its wide development, its complete organization, before you lay it all down at the feet of God, the great First Cause, exclaiming: "Not unto us, not unto us, but to Thy name be the praise!" It is well; for then this Eucharist will become, like every thanksgiving, a very fruitful thing.

There is nothing in life so rich as thanksgiving, nothing with such a strong reflex action. It is the spring of effort. Out of the Thankfulness of Jesus came the great cry of welcome to the weary, which has stirred the world ever since; out of it the Voice that penetrated into the caverns of the dead, and proclaimed the truth of the Resurrection; and it was when He had "given thanks" that He instituted the crowning Sacrament of His Love. Thanksgiving is fruitful, it makes worry impossible, anxiety a sin, doubt a disloyalty, difficulties helps, not hindrances. "He smote the stony rock indeed, that the waters gushed forth;" shall He not do this again, and more? What do we mean by this Service? One answer is clear; we mean an Eucharist, a thanksgiving. "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God." "It is meet and right so to do."

(b) It is a great stream and volume of Intercession. Is there not room for that? On what does the Mothers' Union depend for progress, influence, and existence? On your numbers, your six thousand branches, your three hundred thousand members? That may only mean your peril. We know something in London of the dangers of size. The massive physique does not always imply the sound constitution. On the efficiency of your organization? No; that may only mean a huge machin-

ery with no movement or life. On the strong body of opinion, which gives you the power of bringing your influence to bear on questions of the day? That may be your danger; it may lead you into the paths of controversy, which have proved so dangerous a dividing power in movements almost as great as yours; it may infect you with the interest and excitement of those burning questions from which individuals and societies so seldom emerge unsinged; it may divert you from your strong and simple purpose, which is to raise the tone of motherhood in the land and Empire, to lift higher and higher the standard of duty, to cleanse, purify, and strengthen the childhood which is the spring of national life.

On none of these things does the Mothers' Union depend; it depends on Prayer, on nothing else, nothing lower than a great stream of Intercession. "Prayer in the forefront of our movement;" those words head the report of a great work carried on in Scotland. Is prayer in the forefront of your movement; are you ensuring that it is? "To organize in every place a band of mothers who will unite in prayer;" that is one object of your Society, and not the least of the three. Is it so? Does every branch contain a band of praying people? Or is it the peril of your work, that there is much listening, much discussion, much organization, but not much prayer? It is worth while asking the question, and it is worth while asking it here; for one answer to the question, "What mean ye by this Service?" is "It is the Church's great Prayer-meeting". Prayer is offered here with prevailing force, because offered in His Presence and in union with His Pleading:—



“Look, Father, look on His anointed face,  
And only look on us as found in Him;  
Look not on our misusings of Thy grace,  
Our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim;  
For lo! between our sins and their reward  
We set the Passion of Thy Son our Lord.”

(c) In the third place it is a bond of Union. Is there no need for that in a Society like yours; its vastness, wide limits, varied interests, making separation and isolation so perilously possible? In its catholicity, its geographical expansion—it seems to be claiming in a measure, the fulfilment of the prophecy: “She sent out her boughs unto the sea and her branches unto the river”. What is to keep this huge organization together? It is easier to be big than to be united. Membership may become only a name, and there is always the danger of the idolatry of numbers. What is to hold you together? The same power that held together the “multitude of all kindred and tongues and people”—the Lamb that “had been slain”. What can hold together people of different views, types, and conditions of life? There is only one power, the Lamb that once was slain. They are all “one body,” because all “partakers of one Bread”; that is the link between them. It is stronger than death; the Departed, in some unknown way, may “drink it new” in the Father’s Kingdom. It is the bridge which spans all space, so that in spirit the member in London and the worker in Japan are kneeling side by side: it joins all time, it links us on to the ages behind and the generations to follow; in it every tie, bond, relationship, variety of rank and class is lost. It is a Sacrament of thanksgiving, of pleading, and surely also of unity.

“For all Thy Church, O Lord, we intercede;  
Make Thou our sad divisions soon to cease;  
Draw us the nearer each to each we plead,  
By drawing all to Thee, O Prince of Peace;  
Thus may we all one Bread, one Body be,  
Through this blest Sacrament of Unity.”

(d) It is an act of Consecration. I put that last, but in all work it must come first. It is both first and last. Was it not so with the Pattern Worker? “Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God,” was at the dawning; and at the sunset: “For their sakes I consecrate Myself, that they also might be consecrated through the truth”. “They first gave their own selves to the Lord,” so St. Paul emphasizes the beginning of Christian service, and in the casting of crowns before the Throne, the symbol of completeness in life and work, St. John sees its goal. It is an act of consecration. You workers meet first for this, not first to report, discuss, organize, and plan, but to consecrate yourselves at the feet of the Lamb. Where better can you do this than here; and at what Service so fittingly? The Sacrifice is sufficient, perfect, never to be repeated, but ever pleaded and represented; it has the appeal of love in it, it has a force of inspiration about it. Where else can you with safety initiate a movement; where else can you from time to time renew its strength? In the wilderness when the people had finished their work, the cloud descended and the Glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. We have not finished our work, but in the daytime of our success, and the night-time of our failure we have the fire and the cloud of this abiding Sacrament.

This is the workers' Service. Service and Sacrament are inseparable. As in the opening Sacrament of life,

the little child is pledged to service, so here they cannot be divided. "This is My Body," "This is My Blood"; then almost immediately follows: "Here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies"—a pledge to new life and fuller service. Bring your service to the Sacrament; bring your work with all that it means, to yourself and to others, into the focus of the Divine Presence, so undefinable and yet so real. You do well to lay on the Altar, where you plead His Sacrifice, the sacrifice of yourself, your work, your will, and to ask that the sacred fire may descend upon it. For, after all, it is not a Dead Christ whom we commemorate, but a Living Saviour—"a Lamb as it had been slain," but Who stands in the attitude of life "in the midst of the throne," and is with us here. At His feet to-day and always lay yourselves and your work, all that you have done and all that you plan to do. Lay it all there, for it is His and it is done for Him.

" At Thine Altar, Lord, we leave it,  
Christ present it, God receive it."



VII.

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.



## VII.

### THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

*(Service of Intercession for the Pan-Anglican Congress.  
Kensington Parish Church, 20 February 1908.)*

“ I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh ; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions : and also upon the servants and the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit.”—Joel II. 28, 29.

WE meet to-night to talk of, and prepare for, one of the most momentous occasions in the modern history of the Church. You may say that these are exaggerated and inflated words ; but I do not think that they are. We are standing on the threshold of a year full of untold possibilities for the Anglican Communion. I am not alluding merely to the Conference of Bishops which will meet in July at Lambeth, after an interval of eleven years ; from every land, representing the two hundred and fifty Dioceses of the Anglican Communion—meeting for encouragement and prayer. But more than that, this year that Conference will be more than usually remarkable, owing to the Congress of Churchmen and Churchwomen which will meet in the month before (from 15 to 24 June), a gathering of such importance and on such a scale as no assemblage in the history of the progress of the Church has ever reached before.

Such an event is something to touch the imagination, and it is the duty of Church-people to bring the imagination to bear upon it. "From the most distant colonies and mission fields, from the United States of America, from the cities and plains of our Indian Empire, from China and Japan, from the borders of the Arctic Circle, from the Isles of the Southern Seas," chosen delegates will come—chosen because they are experts on the subjects to be discussed—gathering for counsel and prayer, trying to throw a ray of light on dark and difficult problems; animated by one single purpose: The advancement of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad, the spread of the light of His Truth among men.

The idea of this Congress originated in the brain and heart of one man. At first it seemed like the dawning of visions and the dreaming of dreams. The idea was magnificent, but surely impracticable; the world was so busy, the cost of coming such distances so great, it could be no more than a great Missionary Meeting or a glorified Church Congress! But the visions are being realized with almost startling results, they have taken substance and form to a degree that must surprise even their author. The whole movement is growing to dimensions which are both bewildering and overwhelming. It is essential that our own people at home should understand what it means, for London is the host and these delegates our guests. Just because London is a place where great events so easily pass unnoticed, it is important that our own people should be thinking, understanding, sympathizing, praying. And that is why in every Deanery in West London Services such as this are being held, to enable us to obey the call that is



sounding in our ears: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God," and then—who can doubt it?—He will pour out His Spirit.

What is this gathering going to mean? That question is being perpetually and quite naturally asked. After all these years of preparation for it, it is significant that London Church-people should still be asking, What is this Pan-Anglican Congress?

I. It is an illustration, and a very striking one, of the Divine law of preparation—for it is a Divine law. We in this bustling, crowded, hurrying age are apt to forget it, but God Himself has ordained and conformed to it. In the work of creation there were vast periods of time, long intervals when the Creator was, as it were, gathering up His creative forces before summoning each new creation into being. By figure after figure, voice after voice, God spoke to the world, to prepare the way before He spoke to it by His Son; and when He came, in the Life of Christ, was there not the long preparation for the short work—thirty years of preparation for three years work? And so the Church has followed the Divine example; Lent, Advent, Rogation-tide, vigils and fasts proclaim this law of preparation.

We reverse and ignore it, but the Pan-Anglican Congress is going to illustrate it. Already five years of preparation have been spent for ten days' work. Throughout these years a large and representative Committee has been meeting, discussing, planning, organizing; and in that preparation the people of the Church are called upon to take their part. We move slowly in London; we have no time apparently to see visions and dream

dreams. In the provinces, in far-off missionary districts, in patches of colonial life, they know more about it than we at home; and yet in the reality of our preparation lies the only hope of success. Let us learn more, sympathize more, pray more, so that through no fault of ours may the movement fail.

II. It is a great demonstration in force of the Anglican Communion. Think what that means before the world—the breaking down of the barriers, national, ecclesiastical, diocesan, parochial, which so miserably divide us off. St. Paul speaks in inspiring words of the “cloud of witnesses”. When we think of the task the Church has to face, do we not need the inspiration of that reminder, with the faith, hope, and courage that it brings? Were there ever days when the power of Christianity needed to be impressed on the world as now? Think of these living witnesses—their variety—from all lands, all conditions of Church life. The vastness of the whole thing, which needs such an effort to grasp it, is a rebuke to the narrowness which apparently limits the Holy Catholic Church to our own Parish, and forfeits the inspiration which the larger vision means. Is not this Congress a stimulus, an inspiration, by which we should be broadened, encouraged and consoled?

III. It is intended to be a great school of instruction. Every evening there will be mass meetings in the Albert Hall, which is likely to prove inadequate for the purpose; missionary addresses and hymns in St. Paul's Cathedral; meetings in all the great halls in London and the suburbs. But how are the days to be spent? In sectional meetings for the discussion of problems, not only abroad but at home. There will be seven sections, each

with its own meeting-place, its own subjects, its own body of chairmen ; its members drawn together to discuss the questions in which they are specially interested. Do we realize what vast supplies of instruction and information will be provided ? These people come from all parts of the world, from all types of Church life, they belong to social conditions which must necessarily vary. They are gathered to give light on problems that lie very close to us, such as, " How the Church can bring the power of Religion to bear on the home, the workshop, and the office ". People sometimes say that Religion is too much a matter of theory, that it is too abstract, that it is not in touch with modern life, but surely such a question is practical enough. Or again, " How gambling and intemperance may be conquered," " How the difficult questions which circle round the subject of marriage can best and most wisely be solved," " How the Church can care for and interest herself"—we have some of us suffered from the want of it—" in the young who leave their homes for the Colonies or India, and save them from moral danger and spiritual lapse," " How the heathen can be won " so that " the glory of the Lord may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea ". And behind all these, the real ground on which Missionary effort must be based—not that it means the plucking of brands from the burning, for many then might rightly stand apart, but—the fact that the people want Christ and Christ wants them ; that each nation has its own important contribution to offer to the fullness of the Gospel, its own share in the glorious and final triumph of the Kingdom.

IV. It is to mean an outburst of Thanksgiving. Is it

not something to give cause for thanksgiving that such a thing is possible? All that has been done at home and abroad, all Church work, the growth of missionary effort, the great revivals which have succeeded each other and contributed so much to bring out the harmony of truth, all that we of the British race owe ourselves to Missions—all these things we have to be thankful for. The crowning aspect of the Congress will be an outburst of thanksgiving; it will open with a penitentiary Service in the Abbey, but it will close in St. Paul's with a Service of thanksgiving. This Service will be by representation—St. Paul's itself could not hold a quarter of those desiring to be present. A great offering will be made, great not only in amount, but great also in the area over which it has been collected, each Bishop presenting the offering of his own Diocese. It will represent the noble offerings of the rich, and the tiniest, most insignificant offerings of the poor. Already for some time past the collection has been going on. In missionary outposts, in China and Corea, in native districts of Africa, they began collecting long ago to send their own small stream to swell the mighty flood. What are we doing with regard to this great offering? Have we begun yet? If not, there is not a moment to be lost. Arrangements are being made in Rural Deaneries, in Parishes, by individuals—who ought each to be making their own plan for a self-denying contribution. But it all means far more than a question of money. Thanksgiving is the ground of confidence, the spring of effort, the inspiration of prayer.

Then there is the living part of the offering for the missionary service of the Church. A Bishop, a band

of Clergy, laymen and laywomen, are coming to be consecrated to God for that purpose. Already parents are asking why they should not spare one of their many sons for work abroad. Young men and women are putting the question to themselves: Is there any reason why I should not offer? The greatest part of the outburst of thanksgiving will not consist in the cheques laid on the Altar, but the men and women who will stand up and say, "Here am I, send me".

V. Last of all—what else can we do? What part can we take in preparing for the Congress? First, for all of us, *humiliation*. There could be nothing worse, more deadly, more fatal, than that this great Congress with its enormous size, should feed our self-satisfaction, our self-importance. We have much to be thankful for, but also much to deplore, in others and ourselves. Is there no apathy and indifference clogging the wheels of the chariot of the Church in her efforts to obey the plainest command, for there is no ambiguity about it, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature"? Are we not responsible? People speak of the "heathen at home," and urge them as an excuse; but neglect of one duty is a poor argument for the neglect of another. The whole thing lies beyond the region of excuses; it goes deep down into the Spiritual life of the Church and the individual. Missions are no mere appendix to Christianity, but an essential part of it. Let us search our hearts, and go down on our knees and humble ourselves.

Then we should study the literature of the Congress, which ought to form a permanent part of the missionary literature of the world. It is easily obtained; get it

and read it. Study the subjects, talk about them, do something to become really acquainted with them, to put yourself in touch with, and welcome the problems which will form the subjects for discussion.

We must pray, for in truth it all depends on Prayer. It was begun in prayer, and it will fail if it is not carried on in prayer. Have we realized that yet? Let us pray more in the public Services of the Church; there is no reason why some of the special Collects should not be used at least after every weekday Service. Could we not use one or more of them every day in our private prayers? The Clergy might gather their Communicants, perhaps weekly, now that the time is so near, for united intercession. It all depends on that. We may organize, plan, gather together from the four corners of the earth; but the Congress will be only "dry bones" unless the Spirit of God is on it. Above all things, pray for the Breath of God to come on the dry bones of these plans of ours, that they may really and spiritually live. And if we prepare for and welcome it in this way, there will come the answer of the glorious promise of the text: "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; . . . and *I will show wonders*".

VIII.

THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY.





## VIII.

### THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY.

(*St. Barnabas, Kensington, 17 November 1907.*)

“Concerning the collection.”—1 Corinthians XVI. 1.

WHAT an uninteresting, uninspiring text, I seem to hear some of you say ; it is just the old story, another collection for another object, and the text simply, bluntly, and baldly states the fact.

“Concerning the collection,” there is not a hint of spirituality, not a touch of inspiration, not a breath of religious life and fervour ; it is just money, the old weary cry for money penetrating even into the Sanctuary ; have you nothing better to speak about than “Concerning the collection” ! And yet, I venture to submit that such criticism is altogether misplaced, that under cover of these bald, dry words there is a wealth of spiritual meaning—“the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life”—and the words involve truths and teachings which touch vital principles of personal Religion, and go down to the foundations of the spiritual life.

Mark for a moment the context in which the words stand. We read the Bible with our artificial divisions of chapters and verses, and so we miss the force of the connection which exists, and the power of the contrast

which the passages suggest. Look then at the context in which we find these words, and you will see that they gain power and meaning from the position they fill. The commonplace phraseology, the bald statement "Concerning the collection," that seems more suited to the vestry and the counting of the alms, than to the pulpit and the preaching of the Gospel, is lighted up and transfigured by a great spiritual meaning; just as the commonplace scenery or the quiet pools near the shore are touched with the golden glory of the setting sun.

The earthly phraseology has a heavenly message; let us see how this is so. The Apostle has just written what we call the fifteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthian Church. What a chapter it is; full of powerful arguments and pathetic associations! It has sounded in the ears of many of us at some of the saddest moments of our life, when laying to rest the body which is the shell of the departed spirit. He has been dealing with the opponents of the resurrection of the body and scattering to the winds their flimsy arguments; he has been contrasting their theories with the glorious fact of the Resurrection of the Lord; showing how the glory of that Resurrection is reflected on every human body in the vast mass of humanity of which He made Himself the Head; sketching in a few vivid sentences the seed-time of weakness, dishonour, and corruption, and the harvest of power and beauty. Who has never felt the force of the contrast, and tasted the consolation of the words, if not in the first blinding paroxysm of sorrow, at least in the calmer moments when the first bitterness is past?

Death is looked in the face, and at a time when the dominion of death is terribly apparent, when all the surroundings seem to speak of its tyranny, this chapter bids defiance to death. It looks like the victory of evil, disease, and change ; it looks as though humanity were flung against a great stone wall, where it can only be beaten out of all semblance of life ; and then all at once the peal of triumph rings out, in the very moment of defeat there is the proclamation of victory. The Trumpet which calls to Judgment sounds the knell of sorrow and sin ; the risen dead and the transfigured living throng in vast multitudes about the Throne of Him who has Himself lived and died, and risen from the dead. St. Paul ends with the vision of the future life pulsating with strength and beauty, the great voice of thanksgiving pealing forth, welling up from the depths of a human heart and breaking into what sounds so paradoxical—"Thanks be to God, Which giveth us the victory !"

It is a splendid picture, is it not ? Inspiring, consoling, triumphant, is the vision the Apostle sees, and then he speaks again, "Now concerning the collection". What a descent it seems, what a jarring contrast, what an abrupt transition ! It is like coming down after the Transfiguration splendour, and the Mount of Glory with its myterious visitants, to find the lunatic child on the plain. Is it not with a chilling sense of disappointment that we hear St. Paul come down from the heights to think and talk "Concerning the collection" ?

And yet, is there not something like it in the teaching of our Lord and Master ? Did He not more than once uplift His hearers to the atmosphere of heaven,

only to bring them down to the commonplace of earth ? “Thy kingdom come,” our thought soars on and up to the time which seems so far away, when “the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” when He shall come, and every knee shall bow, and every nation and every tongue swell His welcome ; and then the next moment we are brought down to the ordinary path of everyday practical duty, along which alone we can reach the goal, before the Kingdom can come, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven”.

Once again, Christ looked on the crowded multitude on the mountain side, He saw in them what makes the pathos of every crowd—under the surface of the many figures, the sorrow, need, and sin, each unit in the mass a deathless soul—and there welled up from His heart the great and beautiful cry which is sounding still, “I have compassion on the multitude”. But a moment later He is thinking how hungry they are, how and whence to get bread for them ; looking in the basket where there were a few loaves and fishes. “How many loaves ?” “Give ye them to eat.”

It is a descent, but not quite such a descent as it looks, when St. Paul speaks “Concerning the collection”. Think how those commonplace words cover important principles. First the great principle of *the consecration of insignificant things*—inclusiveness not exclusiveness is the law of the Gospel. The words emphasize the fact that ever since the Incarnation nothing in human life is common or unclean ; that an immortal essence underlies the accidents of time ; that our distinctions between the sacred and the secular are mistaken ; that Religion is

not life lived in watertight compartments ; that my work, my home, my money, my amusements are not isolated from each other, so that no one part touches the other ; that life is a grand whole, and Religion is the consecration of the whole life, the sacred fire flashing on every part of it, my time, my knowledge, my influence, my money all lighted by the glory from Bethlehem. "Concerning the collection"—the glorious context of the Resurrection chapter lights these words, as the heavenly light illumined the shepherds on the night when Christ was born.

Is this the way in which we regard almsgiving ? Is it to us just an irksome necessity, a troublesome duty, to be got over as quickly as possible at little cost to ourselves, just another appeal thrust upon us ; or do we regard it as God regards it, as Christ regards it, as one great department of the Christian life, involving vital principles which go to the very heart of personal Religion—as real and as great in the eyes of God as Prayer, or Worship, or Work, or Sacrament ?

Secondly, it implies a very essential principle of life—that *every living thing lives only so far as it throws out life*. The traveller in Palestine, on the heights overlooking the Dead Sea, gazes on a lake bright, beautiful, smooth, and glassy, reflecting the sky mirror-like in its depths, nestling against a background of blue hills wrapped in mist ; but let him descend to the level of the lake, what is it that he finds ? Sterility everywhere, the dry burnt ground with no touch of verdure, no living thing ; just the bare trees stretching their skeleton fingers to the sky, not a sign or trace of life—a Dead Sea rightly so called, because it reveals the principle of death. But

4/ why is it dead? Because it has no outlet; it cannot live because it throws out no life, its waters have no escape, no change, no freshness; it is dead because it gives and receives no life. That is the state of the Church, the congregation, the soul, which has missed the meaning of almsgiving. If it knows no missionary spirit, no spiritual activity, no noble self-sacrifice, no generous alms, everything may look fair and good on the surface, it may be surrounded by its hills of privilege, but it has no outlet, no overflow, it is just a Dead Sea.

"Concerning the collection," the Apostle points to the outlet of the Christian life; and if we realize that, then the dreary thing "a collection" will become to us more than a collection, it will be the escape of the soul from spiritual death, the exchange of weakness for power. It will bring the fulfilment of the promises: "He that watereth shall himself be watered," and "To him that hath shall more be given". "He humbled Himself, He emptied Himself, He became obedient to death even the death of the Cross—wherefore God hath highly exalted Him."

5 And thirdly, it involves the great principle of *Christian brotherhood*—the outcome of the family life of the Church, the Household of God. For what is the idea of family life? Interdependence, reciprocity, mutual help, each one contributing something to the happiness, honour, and welfare of the home—if one member suffers, all the members suffer. It is a poor home where no such principle prevails, a miserable home where the strong are not bearing the burdens of the weak. Interchange of thought, opinion, effort, and sympathy makes the reality and beauty of family life.

What about the Household of God ; what about the household of the English Church ? If we find one congregation with all the spiritual privileges, all the necessities and luxuries of parochial organization, and another in the same body, fellowship, communion, in the same diocese and district, wanting the crumbs and wanting them in vain—it is not a mere defect or blemish, it is a fatal flaw in the heart of a Church claiming to be the Body of Christ, and yet denying and contradicting the vital principle which makes her a Church at all—she is only a Dead Sea.

Yet that is the position of the Church of England to-day, for if the principle is true of the Church as a whole it must be true of the ministry of the Church. The Queen Victoria Clergy Fund lays the burden of that on the heart and conscience of every one ; the question asked is not, Are you contributors ? but the deeper question implied by that, Are you Churchmen ? It goes to the heart of things, for it touches the spiritual efficiency of the Church's ministry. How can it be spiritually efficient, when the minister is harassed and worn with anxiety how to feed and educate his children on the miserable pittance doled out to him ? It is a miracle of Grace that the spirituality of so many of the English clergy stands at the high level that it does, under the disillusioning grinding poverty which is a disgrace to the Church of England.

Surely these words are not a whit too strong. It is bad enough that our Churches should be maintained as they are, in a large and increasingly large number of cases, by concerts and bazaars, harmless in themselves but hardly a dignified way for the National Church to raise



money for that purpose—it is hard enough that for the payment of ordinary expenses in support of a Church we should be relying on these means—but it is much worse that the clergy should be treated as they are. There are fourteen hundred livings—so called—of the average value of £67 each ; there are four thousand livings of less than £200, and of eighteen clergy in the Diocese of London, helped by this fund, each having the charge of about six thousand souls, the average income is under £150. And this in the richest city of the richest Diocese of the richest Church in Christendom ! I repeat that it is a scandal, a fatal flaw in the life and system of the Church ; no real blessing can rest on a Church which allows this to continue, and not the least debt we owe to the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund is that it is helping to wipe out this intolerable reproach.

It was said to me by a thoughtful Nonconformist—not an enemy of the Church, not a political Nonconformist but a real friend of the Church of England : “ We fail to understand your position ; you are the wealthiest religious body in the country, and yet we should be ashamed to treat our ministry as you in the Church of England treat yours ! ”

To lift that reproach is the aim of this fund. To raise every benefice to the value of £170 a year may not seem a very exalted aim, but it is something ; and if we are to share in that work we must make an effort to help, deny ourselves something, for that alone is true giving. We feel the shame and wrong of it when we picture the position of a man well-educated, perhaps a University man, on whose training hundreds of pounds have been spent, pinching himself, denying himself all comforts,



seeing his wife a drudge and his children half-educated, and knowing as he does it that he is living and working in the heart of Christian London—London with its stream of gold, its people who spend in a day or a week as much as his income for the year—with its prosperous West End churches. What must such a man think of our Churchmanship, of our Christianity? What must his Lord and Master think.

I leave it to your hearts and consciences. I know you have contributed to this fund with great regularity, you have been good friends to it, and you will not desert it now; but perhaps you will give more intelligently, remembering that there is more to be thought and said than at first sight appears, “Concerning the collection”.



IX.  
THE CHURCH AND THE LAITY.



## IX.

### THE CHURCH AND THE LAITY.

*(Sermon to Lay-helpers of the Diocese of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, 15 October, 1906.)*

“When the brethren heard of us they came to meet us . . . whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.”—Acts xxviii. 15.

No one, surely, ever had more flashes of Divine help and encouragement than the great Apostle St. Paul. Like his Master he was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”; trials and difficulties rained thick upon him, the thorn in the flesh tormented him, death in various shapes faced him from time to time; but the consolations of God never failed him. From that first hour when he saw the Lord in a vision by the roadside, to the last when the martyr's crown was suspended above his head, they crowded his life, and at no moment were they more real than on this journey to Rome. In the shipwreck he alone stood firm—in a vision of the night God stood by him, the fate of his fellow-voyagers was in his hands, they owed their lives to his calm judgment. Bright flashes of encouragement continued to be his; on the island his miraculous escape, and the gifts of healing with their marvellous results. The whole journey was full of encouraging signs. His power

as a leader was recognized; soldiers, sailors, islanders submitted to his sway. It was a journey to the grave, but it was a brilliant triumph.

So we think; but so he did not think himself. The most brilliant triumphs in men's lives are not what others think them to be; the most dramatic and striking incidents are really no greater than those that look insignificant beside them. Our Lord was no greater on the Mount of Transfiguration than afterwards when calming the epileptic boy. St. Paul was not carried away by the intoxication of success, he had lived long enough not to pin his faith to human gratitude; all these inspirations which seemed to others so full of satisfaction and encouragement, failed to move the hidden springs of his being. Something else, something different, something apparently trivial and commonplace, moved him as he was not moved by all those flashes of success. "The brethren . . . came to meet us . . . whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage." No ecstasy, no vision of the night, no evidence of his dominating personality, no effusive gratitude, did for him what that human touch was able to effect.

What was it that he saw? Just a handful of faithful followers, of loyal disciples; and yet when he saw their patient unselfishness and consecrated lives, "he thanked God and took courage". My friends, does it seem strange to you that the great Apostle, the teacher of mighty spiritual truths; the man whose guiding principles and power of life was the constraining Love of Christ, who could say, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"; the man who had gone through

so many perils by land and sea, who could keep his eye on the "one thing" he had set before himself; the man who was "caught up" to obtain a glimpse of things too wonderful to utter, should have been touched, moved, consoled, and inspired, by such an incident as this? It does not seem strange to me, for St. Paul was so spiritual and yet so human; it was that combination that made his power, and that helps to bring his teaching so close to the hearts of men.

Spirituality and humanity together make the inspiration of the Christian worker. We have all known men intensely human, and yet at a certain point their influence stopped short; or we have seen men intensely spiritual, who have seemed cold and isolated, and missed half the power they might have had. The great characters of the Bible had both. Elijah, for instance, who defied the forces of idolatry, "repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down," called down fire from heaven, was the same Elijah who, a little later, for want of human sympathy, lay down to die and prayed what was almost a suicide's prayer. The Divine Lord and Master Himself, the Light and Life of men, was His humanity no part of the power of His Life? He choose the twelve, He selected His friend; He needed companionship. In the Agony, He returned again and again to the Disciples; in the darkness of Calvary He uttered the Cry of Dereliction. Believe me, Christian workers, the power of your work lies in this splendid union, in life and work, of humanity and spirituality reflected back on you from the life of your Incarnate Lord.

When St. Paul saw the brethren "he thanked God

and took courage". May we not to-night feel something of that? Is there no cause for those on whom the special burden of responsibility in this Diocese rests, when they come face to face with the workers of the Diocese, to thank God and take courage? What is that cause? Is it not a question that, at your annual Service, it may be worth while to ask?

First, we thank God because you are *men of action*; you represent the practical, rather than the controversial, aspect of Church life. With current controversy you have nothing to do; into the by-paths of discussions of lesser questions you refuse to turn aside. Your Association is as broad as the Church of England, it goes as deep as the needs of the souls of the men among whom you labour, and as high as the ideals which lead you on. Your main idea and dominating purpose is to be workers for Christ. That is all, but that is everything. It means that with some faint reflection of His Self-surrender, Self-forgetting, and absorption of Will, you echo His cry, "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God!" It is very difficult, for those who have practical experience of them, to exaggerate the needs of the Diocese, and impossible to exaggerate the importance, to the Church and to yourselves, of this aspect of your gathering here to-night—the main purpose which links you all together, the highest purpose of the Christian life—to be "Workers together with God".

Evils surround us, controversies abound, differences are exaggerated, agreements are forgotten or ignored; questions follow each other with extraordinary speed, and people have hardly patience to wait for an answer; discussions on Creeds, Bible criticism, the elasticity of



Church methods absorb a disproportionate amount of time and thought. For some time in the councils of the Church and nation—first in Convocation and then in Parliament—the stupendous task has been undertaken of revising the most controversial of the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, and defining what has never yet been defined, and what seems from its very nature incapable of definition—the limits of elasticity in the Church of England.

Over against this you stand, a body of men of action ; alive to the needs of your Diocese and your day, awake to the splendid opportunities for work, the open doors, never so widely open as now ; but too much alive and awake to turn aside into the paths of controversy. When the Disciples came to Christ with their crude ideas, their rough and ready assumptions as to the origin of evil and suffering, He waved it all aside—there were greater problems to be solved, more imperious necessities to be faced. He seemed to imply that religious controversy and religious life may quite easily lie apart. To speak of and argue about Religion is one thing, and to live for it another. “I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day . . .” the echo of that cry is in the heart of every one of you ; and we have cause to thank God for your love of the Church, of the souls of men, and above all of your Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

You are here, not only because your inclination has led you to become workers, but because you have come to realize the dignity and importance of your own place in the Church. The priesthood of the people is not a matter of individual feeling and impulse, but a necessary

condition of Christian life. "Ye are an holy priesthood," and as priests you must have something to offer. This is an aspect of the laity which is too often overlooked by others and forgotten by themselves; and yet on that much depends.

Let me quote to you some words of Archbishop Benson on the First Epistle General of St. Peter:—

"Save for the first nine lines of the letter nothing is limited to pastors and elders. The pathetic, stirring utterances are spoken to the laity of the Christian Church. Not one duty of work or self-denial or any Christian principle is laid on the clergy that is not equally laid on every layman. No difference is made or marked. It is the laity that should be ready to defend the Faith against any questioner and to answer any who may demand a reason. The laity hear such words and apply them to the clergy. They find fault with the clergy for doing, or not doing, what is no more clerical than Christian. There is not a Christian layman who can disclaim his obligations or contract himself out by devolving them on the smaller circle of the priesthood of the clergy."

You exist to emphasize this truth. You are not isolated workers, you recognize that your Confirmation was your Ordination; you are *priests*, and you dare not, any more than we, be false to your priesthood. It is vital to remember this. The laity claim their rights and privileges; they are being more and more admitted, rightly or wrongly, into the councils of the Church; their voice will be heard presently in the discussions which we await with some anxiety. Is their sense of responsibility keeping pace with the assertion of their rights? Are

laymen taking part in work because they realize their duty as Confirmed and Communicant members of the Church? Everywhere the cry assails me when I ask, How many workers have you? "So few men." "Of all the Communicant men in the parish, I cannot find half a dozen willing to undertake directly Spiritual work." You are here to proclaim the fact that there are men who realize their priesthood and are trying to live consecrated lives.

The question of lay work goes deep down into the life of the Church, and touches every part of it. It is not only through the work of the more prominent members of the Body, but through "that which every joint supplieth" that the Body is knit together. And that truth you exist not only to illustrate, but to extend. Every Lay-helper ought to be a lay missionary, or he is falling short of the true height of his office. He is "to press on other men the obligation of the service of Christ and the Church". Are you doing it? It requires courage, tact, and discrimination. It is a noble aim, and it is sorely needed. "He first findeth his own brother Simon." It is comparatively easy—the temptation of an active temperament—to work oneself; it is far harder to train and influence another to work. It is far easier to work than to break through one's shyness and speak to another man, who perhaps only waits to be asked to "come to the help of the Lord against the mighty". It is worth doing, and it was never more needed than now.

Lastly, you are men of action, but even more you are *men of Prayer*. "To pray systematically for the advancement of God's Kingdom" is foremost among your objects, and must be foremost, in an age when

even the Church herself is full of hurry and excitement, and perpetual discussion. No other order is possible. It was after the great High-Priestly Prayer that our Lord went on to the supreme act of Calvary. The Upper Chamber and the bended knees must come before the toil, the self-sacrifice, and the Cross. You are men of prayer, you are fulfilling your membership not only when you are doing that bit of service in your Parish, but when you plead for yourselves and others, and lay the work before God on your knees; when you pray for those who are outside the circle of the Church's ministrations, whom you know to be untouched by the Clergy or yourselves. I wish to lay this on your hearts and consciences: That you should seek more earnestly for evangelistic effort, missionary zeal, persistence in going after the lost until we find it; call down more insistently fire from heaven to consume evil and indifference, to warm the cold-hearted, to inspire the Church. It is worth while to ask, not "Am I a man of action?" your presence here proves that, but "Am I a man of prayer"? Oh the power of the quiet pauses in the life of a worker! You know something of their value. It has been said that "nothing keeps God more out of a man's life than spiritual work mechanically and superficially done". To the Disciples, as much as to the stragglers from the city, nay more to them, the call had to sound, "Come ye into a desert place and rest awhile".

"He thanked God and took courage." Thankfulness and courage are the twin needs of the Church of England to-day. There are difficulties and perils—men talk about "the crisis in the Church" as if there ever had been a time, except when she was asleep, when there

was not a crisis in the Church! Men tremble for the future of the schools; we hear the mutterings of the beginnings of the storm, the voices which will cry, "Down with her, down with her even to the ground!" We need to hear much more clearly than all else the Voice of our Lord and Head, "Be strong and of a good courage!" We need courage, not the courage of pulpit denunciation or fiery platform oratory, that is not very hard to find; but such courage as will help us constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the Truth's sake. There is room for such courage in all ranks of the Church. And courage springs from thanksgiving.

I know nothing much more inspiring than the spectacle before me of a large body of men lay-workers illustrating the unity of the Church of England; differing in minor matters, with no labels or party catch-words, but strong with a great unity of purpose. "To work for God's glory and the advancement of His Kingdom," that is your purpose, and that will dwarf all differences. For Christ, for Christ! And men need Christ; there never was a time when in their hearts there was a clearer echo of the cry, "Lord, to whom should we go?" You are working for those souls for whom Christ died, for the men who need Him and are waiting for Him. We know it; and as we look at you and meet you and pray with and for you, we *thank God and take courage.*



X.

THE CHURCH AND SEAFARERS.





## X.

### THE CHURCH AND SEAFARERS.

(*St. Paul's Cathedral, 26 October 1910.*)

“There go the ships.”—Psalm civ. 26.

THE Psalm of Creation—so this Psalm has been called. It is a sort of splendid catalogue of the wonders of created life, it rings with the praise and glory of God. The Psalmist trembles with wonder and awe at the thought of all that He is and does. One by one the marvels of the world flash past, one by one the glories of the universe march in procession by him. God's Beauty, His Power, His Wisdom, and above all, and crowning all, His Goodness, are before him robed in the forms so varied and so different, of earth and sea and sky. And yet, different as they are, there are two links that unite, and with all their difference make them one: They belong to God and they depend on God. That dazzling light with which He clothes Himself as with a garment; those heavens bright with brilliant points of light; those waters now tossed mountain-high and now sinking to the lowest depths; that land teeming with life; that sea so different from the rest with the wonderful mystery of its unfathomable depths—all are one in this, that they belong to God and they depend on God.

"Oh Lord, how manifold are Thy works!" "These all wait upon Thee."

Then all at once, abruptly, the voice of the Psalmist breaks out in words which at first sight seem to have no connection with the rest: "There go the ships". They seem out of place in his song. So different from the other works of God, so far below the level of the glorious sunshine or the towering hills; surely they stand apart from the rest? Can it possibly be said of the ships that they belong to God and they depend on God? Undoubtedly it can. They are God's, those ships, as much as the mountains and trees and the living things are His. They are His, those ships, His Hand, through the hands He has made, fashioned them; His Mind, through the minds He has inspired, designed them; His Will directs them; they are fulfilling His Purpose. It is no jarring cry clashing with the song of created life: "He maketh the clouds His chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind". "Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment: the waters stand in the hills." "He bringeth forth grass for the cattle: and green herb for the service of men"—when he adds: "There go the ships".

Is it not worth remembering this? It is so easy to think of the earth and sky, the mountains, the valleys, the trees, as the property of God; but the *ships*—the work of men's hands, designed by men, built by men, guided and worked by men—are these God's? Can they be said to wait on Him? There is only one answer, it is the answer which means everything to the men who "go down to the sea in ships and do their business in the great waters," to those who belong to the brotherhood

of the sea, so largely represented here to-night. To you who are on active service, you for whom that is past and who are now in those Fire Brigades with which I have the honour to be officially associated, you boys training to be admitted to the brotherhood and trying to prove yourselves worthy, the answer means everything; because it helps you to believe in the greatness of your calling and lifts it up above all others. "The sea is His and He made it." Yes; but it is also true that the ships are His and He made them, like the other things that He made, to fulfil His Purpose and do His Will; that through them men might conquer the wind and the waves, make the sea their servant and not their master, and cause it to contribute to the very life of the land. It is true that, as belonging to God, depending upon God, fulfilling the Purpose of God, counted among the works of God, we may say: "There go the ships."

What is their purpose? Is it not this—and it makes it a great thing to be seamen, and a responsible thing—to be the carriers of the world, links between scattered peoples, messengers of their country; to carry wherever they go the character of England, the reputation of Englishmen; to have the credit of their country in their keeping; to show before the eyes of other nations what an Englishman's Religion means? The purpose of the ships is to say more clearly and loudly than any words, through the lives and actions of the men who work them, that the English name stands for honour, purity, sobriety, honesty, and kindness, clean hands and a pure heart, the Righteousness of Christ—because they are men who have discovered their need of Christ and learned to look up and say: "To Whom

should we go? Thou alone canst save and help!" It is because the ships mean this—and because I am certain you who are here to-night intend they shall mean it—that with deep interest, prayer, hope, and fear, we look after them, follow them with rapt gaze and cry: "There go the ships".

The ships mean the men. "There go the ships." The words stir the heart of every man who looks at them and thinks about them; for another cry is behind it, giving force to it: "There go the men". It is not difficult to imagine what sort of picture was in the Psalmist's thoughts. "I was walking the other day," said a great preacher, long since gone to his rest, "by the side of the sea looking out over the English Channel. It so happened that there was a bad wind for vessels going down channel, and they were lying in great numbers between the Goodwins and the shore. I counted more than a hundred waiting for a change of wind to take them out. On a sudden the wind shifted, and with marvellous rapidity the sails were spread, and the vessels of different forms and sizes vanished like birds on the wing. It was a sight worth travelling a hundred miles to see, and one's instinctive cry, spoken with keen interest and delight, was: 'There go the ships!'" Of course it was interesting, it always is. Questions come thick and fast. What are they? Who owns them? For what port is each bound? What sort of voyage lies before them? How and when will they return? But there is another question—not what about the ships, but—what about the men? Those ships so different—the man of war, the merchant vessel, the liner, the fishing boat—what is it that they really represent? Just

so many men, so many lives, so many deathless souls. Is that not the power and pathos of the picture? "There go the ships." Whatever else they are, they are the homes of men, whose wonderful value and preciousness is measured by their having been made by God and purchased by the Blood of the Son of God.

My friends, that is how the Church regards the ships. She is the National Church, and so she is proud of the national shipping, but the real meaning of the ships for her is the men. One who has lived his life for seamen told the following story at a great Congress held in London three years ago. He was walking one day with a young sailor who was just starting on a very long voyage, and the young fellow turned to his mother, who was also walking with him, and said: "I expect that by the time I get to the other side you will have quite forgotten me, with all the others round you and such a lot to do". And his mother said what any true mother would say: "My boy, I should be a strange sort of mother if I did; the farther you go the more I think of you, not an hour passes that I do not have you in my thoughts". That is the answer of the Church to her sailor sons—this Service is just a reminder of that. Sometimes when far away from home and the old country, the thought may have come to you: Does any one think of us; does any one care? That is one thing that everybody wants to know: Does any one care for me? Is it not everything that the Church should answer, "The farther you go the more I think of you; I have you in my thoughts".

You remember the Disciples in the storm, and the cry which rose above the thunder of the waves, and the

sound of the straining timber: "Carest Thou not that we perish?" It was not a cry of fear, they were too well used to the squalls on the Lake of Galilee for that; it was just the human longing for sympathy, and to know whether the Master cared. Have you never felt that longing? I do not believe there is a man, not the most self-controlled and independent, who has never felt it—not the greatest in the land is above the level of it. Do you not think our own Queen feels the power of sympathy going out to her with a rush to-night from four thousand sailor hearts (the warmth of whose sympathy makes both their peril and their power)? I am certain you have felt the longing for yourselves on some lonely watch, or when laid aside by sickness; something took your thoughts back to the old country and the old home; or in one of those struggles with temptation which you know and I know so terribly well, you have felt the question stirring in your hearts: Does any one know about me; does any one think of me; does any one care for me?

To-night, in the name of the old Church, I tell you that she cares. Is that no source of power for any one of you? Soon after the South African War I confirmed a number of soldiers, and several of the young fellows told me afterwards what a help it often was to them before a battle, when the thought of home and dear ones was vividly before them, to remember that the people at home were praying for them. Let this also be a help to you. When you land on a foreign shore, with strange faces round you and a strange language in your ears, it is something, is it not, when the chaplain or missionary, in the roadstead or harbour, or on the river or canal, the

isolated lightship or lonely lighthouse, pays you a visit, gives you a grip of the hand, and in a cheery voice utters a good hearty English welcome? It just shows what it is so much for a man to know, what saves him on the brink of sin, or lifts him up when lonely and depressed, giving him new strength to hold his own among the temptations round him, through Prayer and Worship and Sacrament. It just shows a man what this Service is intended to show you, that the Church thinks of and cares for, welcomes and helps, her sailor sons, and asks them to remember not only that they want her, but that she wants them.

So the cry follows you as you leave the Cathedral and rejoin your ships and start upon your voyage, "There go the ships". "There go the men"—and the questions we ask about the ships we ask about the men: What is their ownership? Whose are they? The answer comes so straight and strong: They are God's, those men, they belong to Him; He is their Owner, He is in the ship. Oh the power of it for every seaman to be able to say, "God is in my ship". Do you remember how St. Paul once thought of it and reminded others of it? In the midst of the storm he stood, the only one unmoved; physically the weakest man of all, and yet in another sense the strongest, amongst pale faces and despairing men, with death staring him in the face, he told them their lives were spared by that God "Whose," he cried, "I am, and Whom I serve," Whose angel stood by him in the night, Who was in the ship. I can imagine nothing which will do more for you than that thought—God is not a far-away God. It will stop you on the edge of the precipice of sin, shut your lips when the



word is trembling on them which a moment afterwards you would give worlds to recall, fill you with hope and courage when your heart is failing you and you are wondering what the dear ones at home will do without you—just the thought, the great stirring thought, that you are sailing under the flag of God, Whose you are and Whom you serve, that God is not far away, He is in the ship.

We ask some more questions about the men, as we do about the ships: What is their port? Whither are they bound? What sort of voyage lies before them? How will they return? In one sense God alone can tell whither your life or my life is leading; how the course of your character or mine is shaping; and in what way we shall land on the farther shore. We cannot tell. We can but do our best, struggle on, try to say "No" to ourselves, and trust that He will bring us home. Even if it be not as others come home to port, undamaged, fresh and strong as when we first went to sea—as you younger ones at this service, who are starting with white sails and untorn rigging, determined, with God's help, to keep the vessel of your own life clean and pure. That may be impossible for us; still it will be well, even if we can only say, we who are here to-night and who can never hope all to meet again, but on that farther shore:—

“ Safe home, safe home in port,  
Rent cordage, shattered deck,  
Torn sails, provision short,  
And only not a wreck;  
But oh the joy upon the shore,  
To tell our voyage perils o'er.”



XI.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN.



## XI.

### THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN.

*(Church of England Waifs and Strays Society, Annual Festival, St. Paul's Cathedral, 29 May, 1911.)*

“The Beautiful gate of the temple.”—Acts III. 10.

IT deserved its name, for it was very beautiful—beautiful in itself and leading on to what was more beautiful still. The Beautiful Gate of solid brass and curious workmanship, surpassing any other of the gates of the Temple, seventeen cubits high and thirty broad, took twenty men to open or close it. As the worshipper passed in at that gate the splendid structure rose before him with its open courts, graceful porches, vista of galleries, sweep of stairs—the wonderful threshold of that great place that had taken forty-six years to build, standing there for the principle of the “beauty of holiness”; foreshadowing a splendour far greater than its own; reminding all who entered in at it of the Divine law of preparation, saying to them, not in the mistaken sense in which we sometimes hear the words interpreted, but with a glad sound of joy and welcome, “Prepare to meet Thy God”.

Long centuries have passed since that Temple crumbled to the dust, and that gate fell before the battering-

rams of the Roman legions, but as a great parable it still remains—the parable of those gates of which life is full; gates which for some of us have closed already, and for some of us are swiftly closing now, while for others they are swinging back with a welcome full of hope and joy and promise.

Of what does the Beautiful Gate of the Temple speak, and what does it specially say to us to-night? It proclaims the great importance and beauty of the beginning of things. Surely the world is full of temples, temples of art, of science, of service, of religion—the whole world is like some glorious city where temple rivals temple in magnitude and splendour—and every true temple, every phase of life, every incident, every experience that comes with the mystery and possibilities of those quiet courts, has its prelude, its threshold, its gate. Often that gate is a beautiful gate; indeed every true temple must have a beautiful gate, if it is the Divine thing it claims to be. God's beginnings are always beautiful, always worthy, as ours so seldom are, of the great realities to which they lead. It is the wonderful continuity of life which makes the impressiveness of life; there is nothing disconnected, nothing isolated, nothing fragmentary, nothing apart. "One mightier than I cometh after me," is the message of each thing as it comes. "Thou shalt see greater things than these," is the promise which every wonderful experience brings with it. It is we who are so short-sighted, so mistaken that we treat as ends what are only beginnings; we treat as temples what are only gates.]

There is, for instance, the vast temple of the universe, with its great area, its massive power, its lights, and its shadows, its aisles of beauty and its quiet courts where

it hides away its treasures, its darkness, and mystery, its place of knowledge, its ever-ascending steps of truth. The Bible opens with the poetry of its Beautiful Gate—the sweet story of peace and joy and love and human companionship, of wedded bliss and dawning family life, and the recognition of the great First Cause, and the close communion with God that was to make the world what God meant the world to be. The story of Creation describes the gate of the temple of the universe.

Then, again, there is the temple of the Church, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and Jesus Christ the Corner-stone—that stately structure of human souls slowly rising to completeness ever since the day when the great Master Builder said, “I will build My Church”. There it stands to-day—the temple of the Church. For all its human imperfection, its weakness, its waves of coldness and indifference, its timidity and cowardice, its aloofness often-times from the social troubles of the people—there it stands, with its pavement of authority, its pillars of truth, its incense of prayer, its smoke of sacrifice, and its ringing sound of praise; for, in spite of all, the gates of Hell have not prevailed against it. And on the threshold of that temple is the Beautiful Gate of Baptism. How poorly we teach our children of that beautiful gate of the temple of the Church, with its wonderful mystery and its exquisite simplicity, the blessed water, the sacred sign, the welcome of the Church, the prophecy of the riper Christian life. Surely it is not well that our children should hear so little of it, and that we should so seldom speak to them of their tremendous privilege. Rather we should tell them that they are not being asked to

make bricks without straw, that they have not to seek God, for God has found them, that they have not to seek the Church, the Church has sought them. They have passed in at the beautiful gate, and can sing intelligently what they sometimes sing thoughtlessly, "Our feet stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem".

There is the temple of the Incarnate Life. "Destroy this temple," our Lord said it of His Body, but His whole Life was a glorious temple worthy of Him Whose name is called "Wonderful". Beautiful in its symmetry and in its balance was the Life of Christ, each grace fitting into the mosaic of the perfect whole; with its lights of thanksgiving, its shadows of suffering, its music of a ceaseless purpose, its call to the sons of men to come and gaze on it and bow down themselves before it. And it had its Beautiful Gate; the Incarnation was the gate—Bethlehem, with the irresistible appeal of the Child, the picture of childlike humanity, clothing the message of God in the universally intelligible language of childhood. Rightly we bend in awe before that beautiful gate, rightly we soften our voices as we speak of that mystery of Godliness.

My friends, there is also the temple of human life, and Childhood is its gate. Wonderfully ordered is that temple of life; with courts and distinctions, not always of God's making, that separate men from men; with its steps of progress by which some climb successfully and some fail to climb; with its music, sometimes jubilant and triumphant, and sometimes in the minor key. No wonder that as we stand within that temple we say and sing, "It is a wonderful thing to be alive". And the gate of childhood is worthy of that temple.

It has a beauty which nothing else exactly possesses; it has a freshness which no antiquity, however hoary and awe-inspiring, is able to give; it has a strength of childlike confidence and trust, and a directness which goes straight to the very heart of things.

It is a serious responsibility to be the guardians of the gate of the temple of life; and if the nation and the Church are the guardians, surely it is for us to see that no ruthless hands strip off the ornaments that God's Hand has made—the decorations of that beautiful gate. And just because we are responsible, the awfulness of the trust lies heavy on our hearts. Go back in thought to the picture of the text—to the gate before which the Apostles stood. Do you not think the contrast must have appalled them, as before that gate, in the presence of all that splendour, within reach of the sounds of prayer and praise, there lay a living parable of human suffering, the representative of a crippled humanity, everywhere, through all time; crippled in body and soul and spirit, crippled now by the taint of heredity and now by the awful conditions of environment; but, from whatever cause, the mere ruin of what God intended and intends life to be? Before that contrast the Apostles stood, as you and I to-day are standing; and for the moment the magnificence of the Temple, the beauty of the gate, faded before the awful problem.

It is the privilege of the great Society that cares for the Waifs and Strays to be the guardian of the Beautiful Gate. No more glorious office could there be. In no more glorious work could you be called upon to share, than to stand and strengthen the hands of "the guardian of the Beautiful Gate"; and surely one purpose of

this Service is to call together and encourage, if one can, with one inspiring word, those who are helping in this grand work, and who have of late with such noble generosity responded to its call.

Surely there is need for such guardianship. All kinds of influences are at work at this moment to threaten and despoil the Beautiful Gate. One class of society, usually described as the upper class (especially the section that represents the plutocracy, the ruling class as it sometimes seems to be to-day), with an almost insane folly, is busy destroying the gate of childhood; with softening luxury, with exaggerated dress, with unwholesome amusements, with a precocious prominence, they seem to be doing their best to rob it of its choicest, chiefest charm. And at the opposite extreme—on the other side of the great gulf fixed, by roughness and cruelty, neglect, homelessness and want—there are those who are making the childhood of thousands of children in this country a dark and suffering thing, just what childhood in God's purpose was never intended to be.

To the rescue of such children this great Society comes. It comes as a national work, for the children of to-day are the nation of to-morrow; as the old Eastern book says, "The world stands upon the breath of the children". "What the children are to-day, the Empire will be to-morrow." It is easy to say this, but as we say it do we remember the thirty thousand children sleeping out every night; the thirty thousand more living in absolutely degrading surroundings; and the five thousand always on the tramp? Is it possible, in face of such figures as these, to say in any congratulatory spirit that England stands upon the breath of the children—that



the children of to-day are the Empire of to-morrow? Truly ours, we must never forget, is a children's age. Other ages have gone down to posterity with other marks stamped upon them, other peculiarities attaching to them ; but the glory of our age is this—that it will go down to the future as the golden age of the children. Never has half so much been done for childhood as is being done now—for the education of children, their feeding, their health, their amusements, their protection, and the limitation of their employment. That it is indeed the age of children is being realized at last ; but it has taken long years of quiet work like this to make the world understand what the waste of child-life means to the future of the nation. It is useless to speak sounding words about the Empire, useless to shout Imperialism, while there is left in Christian England one child hopeless, homeless, hungry and uncared-for !

This is work for the nation, but it is surely more than that. It is fitting that we should come here to-day to dedicate this work, because it is work for the Church. It is done in the name of the Church of the people ; it is done with the full consciousness that these children are hers—that they have not only bodies to be fed and minds to be taught, but spirits to be trained.

What are the methods ; are they worthy of the end ? The method employed is nothing less than home life, for these Waifs and Strays Homes are really homes. Surely it is significant that, while a great number of people are lightly tossing aside, selling for a mess of pottage, in their passion for amusement, the priceless privilege of the English home, this great Society is providing "home" with all the brightness and influence that belongs to

home. Not only that, but even more than that ; it has realized that without religion, without the Religion of Christ that not only puts before the children ■ patient Teacher and ■ wondrous Saviour, but an ideal Child and a hard-worked Boy—without that it can never be that “ Our sons shall grow up like the young plants and our daughters like the polished corners of the Temple ” ; without that it can never be that the greatest beatitude that can rest upon an Empire will really rest upon ours ; “ Happy are the people that are in such a case ; blessed are the people that have the Lord for their God ”.

XII.  
THE BADGES OF A SCOUT.



## XII.

### THE BADGES OF A SCOUT.

*(Parade Service, London Diocesan Boy Scouts, St. Paul's Cathedral, 16 April, 1910.)*

“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.”—1 Peter II. 17.

FOUR short, sharp, decisive words of command—you seem to hear them ringing across the parade-ground, or on the lips of the Scoutmaster while the Scouts are tracking, signalling, lighting their fire, or bandaging the wounded—four keen, incisive words of command: “Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.”

Those four words describe the movement in which you are honoured by having a part. It is a great movement, it is good to remember that. Although this Service is a special parade for the London Diocese (which has its Scouts because it has all its other work amongst lads), it would be imperfect if it did not include other Boy Scouts too. It does not mean, it cannot mean—it is never going to mean—rivalry, competition, desire to separate, or difference of principle. We welcome to-day not only our own Diocesan Scouts, but several hundreds of the original body who bear the name of the

founder. The whole movement is one in spirit, purpose, principle, and we hope in method and plan. It is not a question of who does the work, but a question of those for whom it is done; it is not a question of this or that particular organization, but of the welfare, happiness, and good character of the boys of London. Ever since there came to one distinguished soldier the idea, which was more than an idea—an inspiration—which resulted in thousands of Boy Scouts throughout the land, the movement has grown by strides, by leaps and bounds. It is a great movement, and therefore there is a great responsibility for its leaders (the Scout-master must see to his own life and example), and a great privilege and honour for those allowed to belong to it. I want you to think of it as great, not of something in a corner, not only in London, vast and wide as that is, but of something vaster and wider than that.

It is not enough, however, to be big; is it strong as well? You ask that of a movement as of a man. Size is not everything. A great, powerful-looking man may have within him the seeds of weakness and disease. Sometimes we see a great building rising day by day in beauty, higher and higher, stone on stone, stage on stage; it is wonderful, and it looks strong. Yet some one says, "Yes; it is big, but is it really strong? What are the foundations? Will it stand the beating of the rain, the rushing of the wind, the violence of the storm, the stress and strain of the centuries? Will it last?" Some people are asking that of our movement. It is big and it is going to be bigger, but will it last? What foundations does it rest upon? The fourfold word of command describes what we wish to make it. What

we want, besides numbers and skilful scouting, are the four marks of the true Scout: Courtesy, Brotherhood, Patriotism, God. "Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

(a) Courtesy, helpfulness, consideration for others, respect and honour for all. A true Scout is bound to help other people at all times and by all means; to honour all in the best of all possible ways. It is not easy for everybody to do this. It is easy to honour some people; it is possible to honour no one. There is not too much of the bump of reverence nowadays; people do not always honour those older, greater, or wiser than themselves. It is said that hero-worship is dying out among English boys, that the names of great men are not honoured words to-day. If that is true, it is very bad for England and English boys, for it is bad not to look up. It means that you look round and you look down, but you do not do what it is the glory of man to be capable of doing. I think, however, that most of you here to-day do look up to some one higher than yourselves, not only to God Who is at the top of the ladder of your life. You do honour some—a great king who has ruled his people well; a great statesman who has left his mark; a great general who has saved his country; a great discoverer who has planted her flag on a new shore. You honour some, but the text says, "Honour *all*," not only the successful, brilliant, distinguished, active, good, but all—the dull, weak, sad, downtrodden, the people the world says are worthless, the boy who seems no good, the "waster," as we call him—that is not so easy, and yet the true Scout has to try and do it. Be considerate, polite, help-

ful, thoughtful, because in everybody there is something worth honouring. If you look in the rain-pool long enough you will see a reflection of the blue sky or a gleam of sun; and in the most stupid, useless, uninteresting lad, the one who has least in common with yourself, you will find something to make him worth thinking about and honouring. An artist once said, "There is an angel in that block of marble," and presently with his mallet and chisel he showed people what he meant by carving a beautiful figure out of it. There is a touch of the angel in everybody; and we may make the best of people and not the worst by always being polite and courteous, and helpful and considerate.

(b) Brotherhood, "Love the Brotherhood". All Scouts are brothers. When we say the words of the great prayer "Our Father," we remind ourselves that there is a brotherhood larger than that of the Scouts; for all who own the same Father must be brothers. The Christian Church is one great brotherhood, but there are special brotherhoods too. Boys who have been at the same school are bound by a link to each other; a regiment is a real brotherhood, all are concerned with the honour of the whole; and a patrol or troop of Scouts is a brotherhood where no one is allowed to feel neglected or alone. This movement is a big brotherhood, and if we are not brothers we have no right to a place in it. "Every Scout is a brother to every other Scout," no Scout is living for himself, fighting for himself, caring only how fast and how far he can get on himself; the whole movement is a great and glorious brotherhood. We must strain every nerve to help not only by words, but by example and influence to make and keep it so.



During the Boer War a young officer, who was leading his men to an attack, fell wounded with a bullet through his lungs. His Colonel came to see him, and asked if there was anything he could do for him. "Yes, Sir," he said, "you can send my love to my mother, and say the Lord's Prayer with me; but first of all tell me, did I lead those men quite straight?" What a question for every one of you! Not, do I belong to this or that patrol, but what sort of brother am I? What example am I setting? Am I going myself and leading others "quite straight"?

(c) Loyalty, patriotism, "Honour the king". A Scout cares for other people, honours all men, loves the brotherhood; and a true Scout also loves his country and honours his Sovereign; he is a citizen, subject, and patriot. "Honour the king." That does not mean only waving of flags and shouting of songs about war and fighting, though waving of flags has often meant more than that—it has meant duty, self-sacrifice, unselfishness, courage. But "Honour the king" means more still—to know your country, love your country, serve your country. To know your country, not only the city in which you live, or the part of it near your home, but the vastness of the Empire to which you belong, and in which God has been good enough to place you. Be ready to serve your country; not to ask, what will my country do for me, but what can I now, and when I grow to manhood, do for my country? That is patriotism, loyalty; aim at it, Scouts.

Try to serve in some way or other; work hard, take trouble, be willing to be trained. Remember that although you belong to a great country, it will not be

great or remain great unless every lad does his best in life, character, and conduct to help it to be great. It is not only the colonies, the ships, the well-trained army, but the character of the men who people the colonies, who man the ships, who take their places in the ranks of the army, on which our national greatness depends. You English lads of to-day will be the men of to-morrow. Scouts, learn then to be brave, truthful, unselfish, pure, clean in thought, word, and act, God-fearing. Ask God to help you to do something for your country. This is what the third word of command means.

(d) Then we come to the greatest of all the four words of command; on it the other three depend, it is the hinge on which they turn. "Fear God." My lads, you cannot do the rest unless you fear Him. Not in the sense of being afraid of God—surely there is no boy in this Cathedral who is afraid like that? Afraid of the kindest, tenderest Friend he has? No, but reverence Him, think about Him, acknowledge Him, obey Him not less than you obey your Scoutmaster; work, play, scout, feeling all the time that you are in His Presence, that His eye is on you, not to pick out your faults but to see the good in you. Fear God! It all depends on that. We "honour all men" because they are made in the image of God (it is true we do not see much of it, some people are like badly developed photographs, smirched and spoiled pictures), we "love the brotherhood" for we have one Father, we "honour the king" because God has taught us to do it; our country is great because God has helped it to be great, and there is one word above all the rest, "Fear God".

Let those words sound in your ears and echo in your hearts. Ask yourselves, "Am I a true Boy Scout?" and answer, not by saying, "Of course I am, because I wear the uniform, have won the badges, passed the tests," but by asking yourselves another question: "Have I the marks of a true Scout on me, so that every one who watches me can see them? Do I honour all men? Do I love the brotherhood? Do I fear God? Do I honour the King?"



XIII.

THE WORTH OF MAN.



### XIII.

#### THE WORTH OF MAN.

*(Chapel Royal, St. James's, Advent Sunday.)*

“What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?”—Psalm VIII. 4.

Few of us, I imagine, have chanted this Psalm without picturing to ourselves the circumstances under which it was composed. In thought David was ■ lad again, keeping his flocks on the plains of Bethlehem. There in the stillness of the night, no cloud dimming the lustre of the constellations burning down on him, the feeling of his own insignificance overcame him. All the world was sleeping, he alone was awake; in solitude, face to face with Nature, he felt an overwhelming sense of remorseless power. Everything was wonderful and bewildering; there was no one to turn to, no one to answer the question of his heart, and his spirit sank, the mystery of the Power of God became too much for him. But it was only for a moment that this feeling of hopelessness lasted; he had the master spell to lay the apparition—he was not really alone, for God was with him; he was not really insignificant, for God was mindful of him. Great and wonderful as were the things he saw, he was greater and more wonderful than they;

fresh from God's hands as they were, he was nearer still. For him Nature was always full of God; the clouds were His chariot wheels, the thunder the echo of His voice, the lightning the flashing of His eye; so his terror at the powers of Nature gave way to wonder at the Power of God, to amazement at the insoluble problem of man. "O Lord, our Governor, how excellent is Thy name in all the world!" There was the vivid contrast—God so Great, man so limited and puny as compared with God, and with the mighty forces round him; and yet this was the wonder of it, God was mindful of him. He must have some secret value, some hidden preciousness; what was it? There seemed to be no answer, and the question rang out, almost despairingly, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"

My friends, "life," it has been said, "is eternally old and yet eternally new," and the echoes of that question are sounding still. The question of the peasant lad has not yet been answered by the most careful investigations of the modern scientist; let him explore as he will, let him deduce laws and trace them back to the simplest principles, and still the question recurs, taking him to the very heart of things, "What is man?" "Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands"—that is true, more true now than ever before; they are the words of a seer as well as the song of a saint. The dominion of man over Nature is wider and completer than it ever was; the 'all things under his feet' cover a vaster field than



ever before; but there is no silencing the question: "Thou hast given him dominion," why? Is it because he is the subtlest and most intelligent creature of God's hand; or is it because he possesses a nature of which the rest of the world knows nothing; not that he is different in degree but different in kind? "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"

How old and how varied the question is; it meets us everywhere. We open our Bibles and read the poem of the Creation, which in its broad details has been so wonderfully attested by the latest discoveries of geological science, and it confronts us there. What is man? What makes him differ from the other created works of God? We enter a church—what in the men and women worshipping there makes them alone of all God's creatures capable of intercourse with Him? We move in society—amongst the men and women we know by face and name and think we are familiar with—and then there comes the snapping of a link, some one disappears, or we stand by an open grave hearing the solemn words: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and it is almost impossible not to ask what is the meaning of it? What is man?

Then we turn to ourselves and ask: What am I? What is my true, my real self? I am conscious of a threefold nature; which part of me is monarch of the rest, which is the unchanging self? Is my body myself? Well, there is much to be said for that; it expresses my feelings, registers my moods, affects my highest thoughts and feelings, it looks at first sight as if it were myself. But the essential part must be unchangeable, and this body is always changing, it is quite

different now from the body of a few years ago. Old friends meet me and say, "how changed you are". Can that be myself? Is my mind myself? That seems nearer the mark. "I think, therefore I am." But is that unchanging either? All my experience of myself, my opinions, my convictions, my view of things, denies it. So I am driven to find some other solution of the problem, some other answer to the question, some other clue to the mystery, why God is mindful of me.

Does not the great truth of Advent force me back to this? For Advent is not only the anticipation of the final Judgment, but even more, a great commemoration of the Incarnation. In the weird, dramatic, and sometimes fanciful details of the first, do not let us lose sight of the grandeur and glory of the second. "He was made Man," "God hath visited and redeemed His people," so the truths of Advent unroll themselves before us. But they only drive us back to the old question. "For us men and our salvation, He came down from heaven"—yes, but why? "What is man, that God should be mindful of Him?"

Lo, the Incarnate God supplies the answer, "Behold the Man". I turn to Christ. "He was made Man." Can He tell me what man is? Can He answer the question He Himself suggests? I follow His footsteps, I see Him as He lives, works, and suffers; I listen as He recognizes the value of the human body, and yet looks past and beyond it, to something greater and more lasting than it; I hear His own question presupposing some secret of human greatness which He knows: "Whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or, Arise, take up thy bed and walk?" I mark

the old truth of the primacy of man, transfigured and transformed into its glorious fulfilment, "We behold Him, even Jesus, crowned with glory and honour," and lo, in Christ, Whose condescension in the Incarnation suggests the question, "What is man, the son of man, that thou visitest him?" I find the answer to the question, the key to the problem of human value, the explanation why God is mindful of man. He has answered two questions the world is always asking—He has told me what God is, and what man is.

Was not that the underlying, indwelling purpose of the life begun at Bethlehem, to tell me what God is and what man is? He never forgot that, never lost sight of it, from the moment He came with all the winning charm of a little Child, on to the moment when He spoke His last words with the moving eloquence of death. He was perpetually teaching, and always assuming, that man is a body fearfully and wonderfully made, that he is a mind with extraordinary capacities stored up in it; but that he is something more—something indestructible, unchangeable—something so essential and wonderful as to explain the mystery of Bethlehem, the tragedy of Calvary, the ceaseless Intercession, the grace of the Sacraments, the existence of the Church. His whole Life seemed to say that there is only one explanation of life, one key to the problem involved in each detail of it—man is indestructible, unchangeable, a living *soul*. The question of questions for him is that of His Divine Master: "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose," that which is in point of fact, "himself?"

Himself—then self-culture means more than the

world is apt to realize. Training myself means the training and development of my highest self—am I remembering it? Have I even begun to set about it? I have a body capable of being developed up to a certain point, a mind with the power to expand, but surely a higher self needing also to be trained, cultured, developed, not a fixed endowment to be finally lost or finally saved. The subject is worth considering, and on Advent Sunday, although it takes us back to elementary truths, it is not out of place to consider it.

What are the forces that make for this self-culture?

1. (a) There is first belief in certain great spiritual truths. That is part of that highest culture. Do I believe it or do I agree with that plausible half-truth that says it does not matter what a man believes, only how he lives; is it true that in every sentence of the Creed a moral influence is stored? Think of the actual message, "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Has that no influence on me? Has that no moral force, no spiritual training. What an attitude of expectancy it awakens, what teaching it gives as to responsibility, and the glorious truth, so often forgotten, of the dignity of man which makes it worth while in God's sight for him to give account of himself. Surely a definite belief is one of the forces making for self-culture?

12. (b) There is the use of certain spiritual acts. *Prayer*—apart from its other aspects, there is the highest self-culture in the act of prayer. "As He prayed He was transfigured." Is that not true of every man who really prays? He is obeying the Master, he is supplying his own highest needs; but also in the truest sense he is facing self-culture, training himself. He is like the

Master in the Garden, rising from His knees to find calmness and strength for the struggle of death. *Worship*—is it not true that, apart from its other aspects, to worship is not only to lay an offering at the feet of God, or to recognize one's part in the brotherhood of man, but to sanctify body, mind, and spirit, as each take their part in it; to deepen the sense of dependence on God; to create an atmosphere which will linger with us during the work of the week? *Sacrament*—is it not true that to reject impatiently all controversial questions about it, to come because He bids us; to trust Him and say, not "I will understand and then come," but "I will come and then perhaps I shall understand," is to exert in the act of coming an influence we cannot measure, and to bring to bear on the training of our highest self one of the greatest, truest forces of culture?

"What is man?" I leave the question with you—it goes deep down. God teaches the answer in many ways; sometimes in rough ways. You remember the story of the great artist at work on the wonderful frescoes in the dome of St. Peter's at Rome? One day, on the scaffolding, while showing the details of the pictures to a friend, he forgot where he was standing and stepped back. In another moment he would have fallen, but his friend seized a brush and daubed the best of all the frescoes. The artist sprang forward to rescue it, and found his work spoiled, but his life saved. That is sometimes God's method of dealing with us—He spoils our plans, daubs our pictures, darkens our home, takes away the one we love best, in order to set us to the work of true self-culture, to make us realize ourselves and ask, "What am I? Why is God mindful of

me? What shall it profit me if"—not in a sense which violates some of the most beautiful words ever written :—

“That nothing walks with aimless feet ;  
That not one life shall be destroy'd,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete,”

not in a sense that violates that, but in the sense of loss that is true of every unused faculty and power—“What shall it profit me, if I gain the whole world and lose myself, my own soul?”

XIV.

THE RESPONSIVENESS OF GOD.





## XIV.

### THE RESPONSIVENESS OF GOD.

“When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”—St. Luke xv. 20.

“I WILL arise and go to my Father. . . .” Very familiar to us all are the various stages of this story, a story which more than any other has rivetted the thoughts of innumerable people through many centuries. We have seen in it the springs which moved, and still move, the soul as it turns its face homewards, the heart-hunger of the soul, that wonderful evidence of its greatness and grandeur. As a man of high birth, with all the traditions of an ancient race, descended from illustrious ancestors through many generations, even in destitution, chains and misery, retains his dignity, because *Noblesse oblige* is sounding in his heart, so the soul created in the image of God cannot be satisfied without God, and sooner or later cries out for Him with mighty yearnings. It “begins to be in want,” and out of that heart-hunger sounds the cry of penitence. The real crisis in the history of any man who has gone away from God is the moment when the story of his life is lighted up by what we call chance circumstances, and it is summed up in the words, “Father, I have sinned”.

We have found in the story the measurements of sin, the two-fold standard. "Against heaven"—against the soul itself with its origin and destiny, against the home with its doors flung open and the countless spirits watching, praying, longing to welcome it in—and "before Thee," that is a severer test, a loftier measure. All the world's measurement of evil, all that society thinks of it, all the gloss which the newspaper, the novel, or the play may place upon it, all the opiates which we employ, calling it only omission, defect, deficiency, weakness, infirmity, all vanish—"I have sinned," not before society, home, friends, those who know and love me best, but "before Thee".

So the story goes on its beautiful course. "He arose and went to his Father." That was the end to which all had been leading up—the insatiable hunger, the desolate homelessness, the aching void, the humbling contrast—the end to which half life's experiences lead now, "He arose and went to his Father". And yet the world has its sneer ready to deaden the sound of the beautiful words. It says that men desert the world when the world deserts them; that the sinner is ready to abandon sin when sin abandons him; that the prodigal turned towards home only when there were no more husks to eat and no other shelter to be found. When invitation fails, the compulsion of circumstances succeeds; we go to God when we are driven, we seek the Bread of Life when we have no other bread. Undoubtedly it is so, we record it to our shame; but the famine is of His sending, it does not come by chance. The hunger and thirst of life, its disillusionments and disappointments, the hopes that mock us, the people that fail us, the break up of

our plans, the stripping of our home—all have a purpose working through them. It certainly is only that purpose which makes it possible to bear them—the purpose written for us in the words, “He arose and went to his Father”.

The world is welcome to its sneer. It says the process is a stereotyped, mechanical one; that as the caterpillar turns into the chrysalis and the chrysalis into the butterfly, so profligacy fades into disgust and disgust into religion; that the last resource of the sin-satiated soul is God. Well, if it is true, and it often is, it not only intensifies the unutterable meanness of man, but far more, it illumines and glorifies the Pity of God. It is the glory of His Work that through it all runs a message for the burdened, the tired, the wasted lives, and it is the sound, however faint, of that message heard in far-off days and which then had no meaning: “Come unto Me . . . and . . . rest,” which wakes the cry so long in coming, for which God has waited so patiently: “I will arise and go to my Father”.

Then there opens the most beautiful scene in this wondrous drama of Religion, the scene in which the wanderer fades for the moment out of sight and the great figure of the Father fills the view; the scene that tells us what we all want most to know, not what we are to God but what God is to us, not what we feel about Him but what He feels about us. “And when he was yet a great way off, the Father saw him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”

(a) “A great way off.” How eloquent this is from the wanderer’s standpoint. Remember it was a far country to which he had journeyed. The words of resolve, “I will

arise and go to my Father," told of an effort, real, determined, patient, exhausting; told of the gathering up of spent powers, ruined self-respect, weakened will, and of a long and weary journey over the road he had travelled from home. There is nothing in the story to justify the fatal notion that the path of repentance is smooth and easy. It is not as easy to return to God as to leave Him—to reverse our life, to retrace our footsteps, to go back and look for the purity we have forfeited, is not the easy task we may think it to be. The son starting on his journey, with powers fresh, energies unwearied, kindling hope, bounding pulses, is a very different creature from the wanderer, weak and faint and weary, slowly, with shamed look and dragging footsteps, making his way home. People forget that "whatsoever a man soweth that," and not something else, "shall he reap". That inevitable law in the moral as in the natural world gives a pathetic meaning to the light phrase "sowing wild oats". They who use it take no account of the contrast of the story, they know nothing of all that happened, that must happen, all the misery, the heart-hunger, the unutterable remorse, out of which at last, by a supreme effort of will, the wanderer cried (as so many others have cried), "I will arise and go to my Father".

"When he was yet a great way off," and yet he was not so far but that "the Father saw him". Not leagues of distance or possibilities of sight, but an immeasurable gaping space of moral failure stretched between him and his home and made him "a great way off". Is that not true still? "A great way off"—that is never really true of God and us. It is a most fatal and common mistake

to suppose that God is ever far off. "A far-away God"—that notion accounts for the vagueness of the Religion of thousands of people at the present day, it explains why it makes so little impression, and has so little influence on their life. It accounts for the resentment which religious reminders often arouse. God is never far away, never far off; you and I have not begun to know what life really is or what Religion means until we have grasped that fact. And yet, morally and spiritually, we may be "a great way off" from our original likeness, our first ideal. There was little in the beggared outcast to tell of the home from whence he came, his sonship and origin; and there is little left in thousands around us, and not much in ourselves, of the coin which bears the image of God.

It is true of thousands that though living in the presence of God, by their own act they are a great way off. I am speaking to some of you who have been Confirmed to-day. You are here with a fresh sense of your responsibilities, a fresh Gift of God within you. You have "begun," now for a whole lifetime you must "continue". Remember that everything depends upon your nearness to God, upon your realizing that God is not far away, and taking pains that owing to no action of yours are you "a great way off". Distrust and suspect anything which, however harmless for others, may be drawing you away from Him; use everything—Prayer, Bible reading, Worship, Sacrament, good friendship, Church fellowship—that can possibly help to keep you at His side. Let the cry of each one be:—

“Then let my way appear  
Steps unto heaven;  
All that Thou sendest me  
In mercy given;  
Angels to beckon me,  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee.”

For remember that the last and worst description that can be given of any one, is that he “turned back and walked no more with Jesus”. May it never be said of any of us that we were once so near, but are now “a great way off”.

(b) “A great way off”—and then into the darkness a bright light shines. “The Father saw him”—not by chance or accident. The words seem to tell of long and anxious watching. “The Father saw him.” You remember the beautiful touch in “David Copperfield”? The old sailor, whose darling has fallen and vanished, night after night puts a light in the window that she may be certain of a welcome if she sees it. Well, the Father in the story had a light in the window. God always has. And then at last, joy of joys, the “Father saw him”. That was the message of Christ’s Life. He whispered it to the fallen woman bowed in shame at His feet, He declared it to the Magdalene kneeling with her offering in her hand, He proclaimed it to the poor guilty sufferer dying at His side: “The Father sees you”. And the message sounds still. God notes our half-turnings towards Him, He sees our imperfect repentance, our broken resolves, our fragmentary prayers, our weakness of will and our poverty of effort—upon all, the glorious light of the great truth shines—the Father sees them.

"The Father saw him;" yes, before he saw the Father. For his vision was clouded, sin and sorrow, hunger and homelessness had dimmed his power of sight; only the pure in heart see God. The Father saw him before he saw the Father. That is the very idea of fatherhood, the idea of anticipation—anticipation of affection, purpose, and plan. "We love Him because He first loved us." The love of the Father to the child precedes the love of the children to the Father; long before the child knows the Father, the Father has loved and known the child. So it ever is—the great truth that before all we are or feel towards God, the Father sees, knows, and loves us. Take that truth home to set against the cruel pictures which have so misrepresented God—as if the Son were all mercy and the Father all anger, the Son stepping out to appease the anger of the Father. Against all that stands the fact that the Father sees us. The beautiful anthem we have heard to-night, "God so loved the world," is a contradiction of these cruel caricatures of God.

(c) "And had compassion on him." Well; that was the inevitable consequence, there could be no other, because He was the Father. You who are fathers will understand. To see him—His child—beggared, starving, homeless, lonely, ashamed, in such contrast to what he had been when He had seen him last—out of His Fatherhood there could be only one result, "He had compassion". Oh the wonderful flash of revelation! The Pity of God is not an accidental attribute, but an essential consequence of the Fatherhood of God. "He had compassion." We find it nowhere else. Nature fails us, humanity disappoints us, our own calmness and cold-



ness sometimes shocks us. The Pity of God—that is God. No other description can so completely and harmoniously reveal Him as this: “His Father saw him, and had compassion”.

“He had compassion.” Yes; before the words of confession were spoken. They were in his heart and trembling on his lips, but they were unspoken; yet the Father had compassion. Has He still? Is it not just the Compassion of God which draws out the confession of man? I am far off, hungry and homeless, but I know that He has compassion, and that is just the one and only thing which may bring me to say, “I will arise and go to my Father” for He has compassion.

(d) And then the hurry of God. He “ran to meet him”. Is there a more beautiful picture in all literature than the figure of the Father, wronged, insulted, heart-broken, running without a thought of lowering His own dignity, or remembering grievances and injuries. He “ran to meet him”. “He ran”—that is not our idea of God. “God,” we say, “is never in a hurry.” “The mills of God grind slowly.” We think of the wonderful Patience of God. Never in a hurry? Well, that is not quite true. “When the Father saw him, He ran to meet him.” There is all the sense of loss that missing one child from the home must mean—a very part of Himself was wanting. The home was incomplete, there was one dumb note in the music, one faded flower in the garden; for the moment it seemed as if there were no other but that one lost son. “He ran to meet him.”

How wonderful it is that God should be in a hurry for you and me! We think of Him so differently, as if He were unwilling, reluctant, slow—“If I ask Him to re-



ceive me, will He say me nay?" And all the time He is running to meet us. The Lord is ready. Let us picture the haste of God, the willingness of God, and the longing of God; His Heart never satisfied while there is one vacant place; let us be sure there is no one here to-night but can say, "The Father ran to meet me".

(e) The welcome of God. "He fell on his neck and kissed him." There are scenes and episodes in life beyond all words, of which one cannot talk; to speak of them is to desecrate them. Surely this is one. Picture the unutterable astonishment, surprise, relief! There were no questions, no reproaches, no lamentations, no tears. "He fell on his neck and kissed him." God never does things by halves. We half forgive, we say we forgive but cannot forget. We reluctantly make the first advance, we cherish in the corner of our heart the memory of the wrong, even when the reconciliation is over. That is not God's way. "Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back" out of His own sight. "Thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more." "I will blot out as a cloud thy transgressions and as a thick cloud thy sins." "He fell on his neck, and kissed him."

It once happened to a man, now on the highest rung of the ladder, that as a boy at school he missed a scholarship which he was quite capable of gaining, and which it was immensely important he should win; on his success his father had set his heart. He failed through idleness and came home miserable, ashamed, uncertain of his welcome. On the threshold his father met him and put his arm round him, and just as he thought he would hear reproaches and regrets, he heard this: "My son,

you have grieved me bitterly, you have given me the greatest disappointment of my life, but I have only one thing to say to you, Try and do better next time ! ” And now he knows, for surely they do know these things in the other world, that all his son’s successes in life are due to the generous love which, fallen as he was, swept him to his feet again. Can you read the parable translated into the story of life ? Some already know it, and for all it will be in some sort the experience of the future : “ When . . . his Father saw him, He had compassion, and fell on his neck, and kissed him ”.

XV.  
AFTER DEATH.



## XV.

### AFTER DEATH.

*(All Saints', Margaret Street, Dedication Festival,  
3 November, 1907.)*

"We went through fire and water, and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."—Psalm LXVI. 11, P.B.V.

ONE of the greatest preachers God has ever given to the Church of England—one in whose name we are soon going to dedicate a house to be a centre of work among men in West London—Canon Liddon—once told in the pulpit of St. Paul's the story of a great traveller who was recounting the experiences of an adventurous life. His audience was listening spellbound to the account of his strange experiences and hairbreadth escapes, when he broke off, paused, and said, "But I expect to see far more wonderful things than these". What could he mean? He was seventy years of age, and his travelling days were over? He explained his meaning: "I expect to see far more wonderful things in the first five minutes after death".

"The first five minutes after death"—it was a striking and startling revelation to them, and may be so to some of us. Think for a moment what the expression recalls,

assumes, and implies. Certainly a vivid realization of the unseen world—it could be no vague unreality to a man who could speak of it like that. “I believe in the life of the world to come” was to him no empty phrase. No dark shadow lay over it, through which the soul had to grope its way unrecognizing and unrecognized; it was all actual to him, as vivid and as real as anything he had been recounting, as real as the death he had looked in the face many a time in the midst of his crowded life. How many of us could think of it as calmly?

Is there anything equal to the ignorance and indifference of men and women, who know they must some day pass the barrier and curtain which divides us from the unseen, as to what lies beyond it? Many people still speak of the soul as “going to Heaven” at death, ignoring the Intermediate State, its school of discipline and training; but the belief in that State is not a pious opinion shared only by a few, it is a belief hoary with the dust of ages. What was the view of the ancient Church? What of the Jews at the time of our Saviour’s Death? For in that respect they were superior to a large number of Christians, and even to many Church-people, who have perhaps been scared by erroneous teaching on the subject. They held that the spirit-life with its memory and thought, with the habits and reflections acquired on earth, entered after death on a new state of being, in a waiting place, not Heaven and not Hell. How did the Saviour deal with this idea? Did He condemn it and sweep it away? No, He assumed it, alluded to it, took the familiar names of Paradise, Abraham’s Bosom on His lips. So He spoke of it; so we should speak it. “The souls of the righteous after

death pass to the place ordained of God for their training, before they come to stand before Him."

It is not only a question of theology but of common sense. To speak of the soul as going to Heaven at death is unintelligent and untrue, and leaves untouched the gravest perplexities of sorrow. We revolt against it. What of the multitudes, we ask, who have passed away with little or no time for preparation? They were not ready to be numbered with "All Saints," they are just among "All Souls". Those we have lost, whom we loved, who were so lovable, who loved us so tenderly, who with all their faults were so genuine and so good; yes, and those others we have met, whose conversation and humour we enjoyed; they were not ripe for Heaven, but "Oh my God," we cry, "they were too good, too noble, and too generous for any Hell!" To speak in the too common careless fashion about the "after death" is unkind, unintelligent, untrue; it leaves the Intermediate State out of sight, it says that the judgment of death is final, which either means the victory of evil, or ascribes a spiritual power to a physical process which it cannot possibly possess.

Here then are the souls in the School of God, under His purifying touch, in an atmosphere so pure, noble, precious, and uplifting, so unlike their environment here which made it so difficult for them to do right, being trained and purified, learning a gradual surrender of will and discipline of character, and unlearning much that hindered them here. Where are they? Where else can they be except in that waiting place of spirits.

If so, is it wise to know and think so little about the conditions of that life? If any of our relations or friends

are in India, Canada, or South Africa, we study maps of the places, we are interested in the habits and conditions of the lives of the people, we grasp at any new book which professes to tell us more about them. Think of that multitude being added to with every ticking of the clock ; is it not worth asking what are the features and conditions of their life ; what have they seen, what shall we see in "the first five minutes after death" ? It would take many sermons to answer all the questions we should like to ask ; but I will try to-night to take one or two which must be in your hearts.

(a) Is there any *variety* in that life ; is that a feature of the life which follows death ? What are they like whom we call "Dead" ? Sometimes the question tears our hearts asunder as it springs to our lips. Are they "like gold coins all cast from a single die," like flowers all of one colour and shape and perfume ? Are they all similar in appearance, occupation and reward ? No ; for they still have their personality, their individuality, the traits of character, the tastes, without which we cannot imagine them. All that is left to them, for the centre of personality is left. The body lies in its resting-place, but the real man lives on superior to the dwelling he has left, lovelier in that other clime, and with personality and consciousness unimpaired.

The Intermediate Life is no sleep or unconscious state—that is an error for which much of the ordinary phraseology about death is largely responsible. The Departed are conscious of themselves, living and therefore conscious with all that makes for human consciousness. They are more alive than they ever were or than we can ever be here, with unclouded consciousness, unhindered



by ignorance, undisturbed by misunderstanding, unmarred by sin. If they still possess personality, they still possess consciousness. Then if so they know us, think of us and pray for us, as we for them. For, let criticism say what it will on the question of Prayers for the Dead, there is only one answer, "We cannot help praying for them, we pray because we must". "But," they say, "what can you pray for, for them? You know so little of their life, you cannot tell what to ask for." Well, I pray for my boy on the ocean or in the distant colony, though I know little of his life and circumstances at the moment of my prayer; I pray because he is my boy and I must; I pray because I believe in God, and because I love my boy.

If personality and consciousness remain, that answers our first question—*they are not alike*, they have each their individual character, they cannot be alike. The law of variety does not disappear with death; death is the great social leveller, it sweeps away surface distinctions, but not the deeper diversities of thought and feeling, they are untouched by it. Those who live under the same conditions do not lose their individuality, those in the same climate, under the same roof, have features distinct and peculiarities of their own, and surely it is the same in the Spirit World. If they are learning in the same school, with the same essential features in their training, being purified, strengthened and developed, they are distinguished from each other there as here. The law of infinite variety penetrates into the World of Spirit. By various experiences they have come there. Some have reached that world like a vessel just creeping into port with torn sails and battered hulk, some

with flying colours, untouched, uninjured ; some have been like clay in the hands of the Potter, others have resisted His work ; some have traded with their talents, some have wasted them. They differ as one star differeth from another star in glory.

(b) Is there *recognition* ? Do the Dead know each other ? Is there intercourse between us and them, and between each one and another among them ? If so, how ? There is no question more important, no question which affects more closely our conception of the other World. We may not realize how vital it is, just as we do not always realize how our relations to one another are interwoven with our life. My love is a part of myself—take my relationships out of my life and I should hardly be the same person. If personality is left to me after death, then that must be left which is so much a part of myself ; my relationships must pass into the other World with me. Love is stronger than death. But, it may be objected, did not our Lord say that there “ they neither marry nor are given in marriage ” ? That is true, new ties and relationships need not be formed there, but old ties may remain unbroken still, and if so, *the Dead know each other*. Wherever the belief in a future state with unchanged personality survives, man also believes in immortality and believes in recognition.

But how can this be if the body has dropped away ? How shall we know and be known ? “ The difficulty of identity and mutual recognition beyond the grave diminishes and disappears, if we assume that the spirit form answers in appearance to the bodily one in which it was clothed.”

"Am I alive or dead? I am not dead  
 But in the body still; for I possess  
 A sort of confidence which clings to me,  
 That each particular organ holds its place  
 As heretofore, combining with the rest  
 Into one symmetry that wraps me round,  
 And makes me man; . . ."

—NEWMAN.

Yes, I shall know them and they will know me, but *how* involves more knowledge than God has yet revealed to us. How quickly and mysteriously recognition sometimes comes—a phrase, a gesture, even the movement of a garment. Our Lord was recognized, and is now, in "the Breaking of Bread".

(c) Is there *observation*? Can they, do they, know us now? Some people think that our doings are reflected in the other world as in a mirror. Of course there is the objection, They cannot sorrow; how can they know and yet not sorrow? But they cannot sorrow even for us; they know the end, they see the meaning, the plan is being slowly unrolled, there is "no night there". They know what is so vital to believe:—

"That nothing walks with aimless feet,  
 That not one life shall be destroyed  
 Or cast as rubbish to the void  
 When God hath made the pile complete."

(d) Then I come to the last question. I have hardly time to ask it, and no time would suffice to answer it: *What are they doing* in the School of God? Obviously if it is a school they are *learning*—new conditions of existence. It is impossible for you and me to realize what those conditions are; we cannot realize in this state what it means for the senses of the

soul to work directly, without intervention of the senses of the body. New conditions, new wonders of God's Power and Wisdom are gradually dawning on them; new measurements of life—how different their estimate of values is from our blundering thoughts. We have our table of values, they are learning God's estimate of values, God's standard and way of looking at things; they have new thoughts of God, new dazzling glimpses of Christ.

*Purifying*—the greatest saint, the holiest soul, can only cry; "Woe is me for I am unclean!" And if this is true of the holiest, what of those who are not holy? What of you and me? So purifying must be also part of the work of that school, a gradual cleansing under the touches of the Master of the School, His reassuring voice speaking to them when the task seems too difficult for their feeble powers, "The floods shall not come nigh thee nor the waters overflow thee". Their constant prayer is, "Lord, cleanse me from my presumptuous sins. Not my feet only but my hands and my head!"

*Working*—in the fullest, broadest, most varied sense of that great word, Work. There is rest in their service, and service in their rest; they are not weakened by sin nor dispirited by failure, and they are untouched by the thought of the interruption of death.

Lastly *waiting*—for the dear ones they have left behind, and for whom they may be allowed to pray; the people they have known and loved, helped or hindered; for you and you; for the extension of God's Kingdom; for the evangelization of the world. Should not their waiting be at once a stimulus and rebuke to us?

Waiting till the trumpet shall sound. How long will it be before they hear, "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord". We cannot tell. We only know that from that school they will enter into the fullness of life for which it has prepared them "We went through fire and water" testing and cleansing, "and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."



XVI

THE DISCIPLINE OF LOVE.





## XVI.

### THE DISCIPLINE OF LOVE.

*(The Guards' Chapel, Sexagesima, 3 February, 1907.)*

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest : go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come and take up the cross, and follow Me."—St. Mark x. 21.

YOU have heard the story from which my text is taken read in the Second Lesson this morning. A young man of wealth and high position had come to feel that he was missing the great chance of his life. It is a serious thing to miss a great chance. Like Jacob when he wakened from sleep and said, "The Lord is in this place and I knew it not," so many a man looks back on wasted chances—the friends he might have made, the knowledge he might have acquired, the habits he might have formed—he looks with a terrible, unavailing regret on the missed chances of his life. This young man felt he was neglecting an opportunity which might never recur ; there was one near him then, Who could answer all his questions, solve all his difficulties. Like the egg-seeker on the edge of the cliff, who sees the rope dangling just within reach, and makes the

leap on which all depends, he was ready, breathless, and eager to fling himself at the Feet of Christ.

Note what brought him there. It was not what we might have expected ; not a sermon, not a miracle, not a story of the dead raised to life, of evil spirits cast out. "*Good Master. . . .*" The secret of attraction was the Goodness of Christ, the magic power which drew men and women and children to Him. He had just taken up the little children in His arms and blessed them, and spoken a few kind words to some careworn women. The young ruler may have seen this, but whether he had or not, it was the Goodness, Kindness, and Gentleness of Christ which more than all attracted him. The greatest power in the world is the power of goodness. Of course we recognize other powers—there is the power of the storm, the sea thundering on the shore ; the earthquake sweeping away a whole city in a moment ; the fire destroying in a blood-red passion the accumulated work of centuries—but, like the still small voice which impressed the Prophet as neither earthquake nor storm had done, there is no power so strong as the power of goodness.

You often hear people say : " There is nothing I can do, no one I can help ; it would be different if I were rich or clever, successful or distinguished ; I might do something if I had five talents, or even two, but I am only among the one-talented men ". And yet, I ask you, have you never known a man, in no way particularly distinguished, quite an ordinary man, yet with a strong influence going out from him, an attraction which made you feel yourself better when you were with him ? The two forces which drew the world to Christ were His Goodness and

His Suffering, His Kindness and His Pain. We remember our heroes—it will be a sad thing for the nation and the individual if what we call “hero-worship” ever dies out among us. In this place, where the memory of so many heroes lingers, which echoes with voices long silent, where you rightly dedicate, in the heart of your service of prayer and praise, memorials to those who have served their King and country; there is not much danger that that form of hero-worship should die out. But we honour them not so much for what they did, as for what they were, not so much for achievement as for character; and the greatest Hero the world has ever known was the Man Who quietly “went about doing good”.

The young ruler came to Jesus and asked Him a question: “Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” He did not understand that eternal life is not quantity but quality, not something far away, but something that has begun already; it is not only after death, but here and now, that we are living it. We have only one life, not two; and every one of us can say now, “I am alive,” not till death, but “for evermore”. “And Jesus said, Thou knowest the commandments. . . .” “All these have I kept from my youth up.” “Then Jesus beholding him loved him.” Are not these simple, natural, beautiful words, showing what a human Heart our Lord had and has; so unlike ourselves, and yet so like? Of course He loves all men, all the world; every man, woman, and child may look up and say, “He loved me and gave Himself for me”. When we say of some one that he loves all the world, we often mean that he loves no one in particular; but

it was not so with Christ. He never lost the personal in the universal. He particularized, He had a special friend, a Disciple whom He loved ; there was no dead level, no monotony in His Love. " Jesus beholding him loved him." What attracted His Love ?

1. He loved him for his high ambitions and noble aims. The young man came to Jesus because he had an impulse towards something better, higher, and greater than his former life. He could not explain his longing, but he knew that Christ could explain it. Many a man in his professional career feels the throb of ambition and longs for the chance to show of what mettle he is made ; but the highest ambition we can have is the ambition to be better than we are. I think there is no one here to-day who has not felt in some form an aspiration, a longing, to be better. Do not thrust it away ; God sends it. Other people may sneer at it, despise it, and chill you, as many a man has been chilled, by telling you that there is nothing noble in you, that what is good enough for others is good enough for you. A great writer once drew a picture of an ideal city, where every one was healthy, happy, and prosperous, and called it " The city that might be ". In every life there is a " city that might be " ; let us take care that it does not become a " city that might have been ". When we have lost what we might have had, we realize that—

" Of all sad words on tongue or pen,  
The saddest these : It might have been."

2. Jesus loved the young man also for his pure life and clean lips. There was no boastfulness in his saying, " All these have I kept from my youth up ". His

life was spread out before him, he had done his duty towards God, towards his fellows, towards himself. How glad the Saviour was of that! "Jesus beholding him loved him;" yet how strangely He showed His Love.

3. *He found fault with him*, put His finger on the weak spot in his character. They say that love is blind, but it is not; true love is too full of care and thought for the honour of the object of its love to be blind. Our Lord fixed His eyes on the weak spot in this man's character. There was no self-sacrifice in his life, no self-surrender; he was not ready to fling off what hindered him, to trample all difficulties under his feet. "Jesus beholding him loved him," and because He loved him He said to him, "One thing thou lackest". *He gave him something difficult to do*, a test which could not be evaded. Is it a strange way of showing love to a person to give him something great, difficult, perhaps even dangerous, to do? You would be the last men in the world to think or say that. No, it is a sign of love and confidence, and to be chosen to do something difficult inspires a man with courage, and draws out the best that is in him. Jesus said to the young ruler, "Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor," and He has something to say to each of us; it may be "Give up that" or "Attempt this"; and we are happy if we can look up to Him and say: "My God, I will—at any rate I will try". Then it will not be written of us, as it was of that man, described by Dante as one "who made the great mistake," that "Jesus beholding him loved him" and yet "he went away sorrowful".



XVII.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.





## XVII.

### A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE.

*(St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow.)*

“His name is called The Word of God.”—Revelations xix. 13.

“There is a book, who runs may read,  
Which heavenly truth imparts,  
And all the lore its scholars need,  
Pure eyes and loving hearts.

The works of God above, below,  
Within us and around,  
Are pages in that book, to show  
How God Himself is found.”

THESE words of a great Saint of the English Church only say in verse what the Apostle said in prose: “The invisible things . . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made”. This is not only true of God’s Divinity, Eternity, and Power. It is true of that because, as God is everywhere and in everything, of necessity the visible things of the world around must reveal Him to us and draw us to Him; but it is true also that the great mysteries of the Christian Faith are mirrored for us there. The Truth of which we think on Christmas Day, when with bated breath and bowed heads we say: “Who for us men and for our salvation

came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man," is pictured in the world around, if we have only eyes to see it and faith to read it. Every union of the sacred and the secular, all combinations of the human and the Divine, all that is to the eye of sense one thing, to the eye of faith another, point us to the climax, the complete union of the Human and the Divine which we welcome in the truth of Christmas—God Manifest in the Flesh.

If it is true that the invisible things are pictured by the visible, it is hardly wonderful if the powers and faculties of human life are made to serve the same end and purpose. The human voice is the faint echo of the Voice of God, human labour a dim reflection of the ceaseless activity of God; but human language, the ordinary faculty of speech, has this unspeakable honour, that it is consecrated to be the Name of Christ. "His name is called The Word of God." How wonderfully St. John clings to that title; no other could put our Lord before us in a clearer light. Many other titles He has: "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace". All these titles are beautiful, but surely there is something specially significant about this, "The Word of God"?

Speaking of our Lord's Divinity, St. John says, "The Word was God"; of His Eternity, "The Word was in the beginning with God"; of His Manifestation in human Flesh, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"; and as a proof of his own authority, "That which . . . we have heard, which we have seen . . . and our hands have handled of the Word of Life". So now when he is drawing the picture of the victorious Christ

—a King with many crowns, a Purifier surrounded by a flame of fire, a Victim with His garments dipped in blood, an Avenger with a two-edged sword in His mouth, a Ruler with His sceptre and His retinue—he falls back on this title again, “His name is called The Word of God”. “The Word of God”—what does this expression say to us? We have often heard it and used it, we may be dimly conscious of the meaning of the phrase, but what light does it throw on Christmas, in what aspect does it put the Holy Child before us and teach us to think of Him?

(a) The Word is the expression of the Father's Nature, the substance of His Thought. Some things are accidental to us; we could dispense with them, and yet remain with our essential selves unaltered; but other things seem to be a very part of our self, of our inmost being, intertwined with our thought, and in them and through them we reveal ourselves. The power of language, human speech, is such a channel of self-revelation. How often do we not say of a speaker, “He threw his whole soul into it,” meaning that his speech was the expression of himself, and revealed it as nothing else could do. Do you wonder that St. John describes the Child Christ thus, “His name is called The Word of God?” What better answer could there be to the question, “Who and what is He?” The Word of God is the expression of the Nature of God. In the Incarnation of Christ we look at God, we see, as it were, into the very recesses of the Heart and Mind of God. “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.” Through all the ages the whole world had been groping after God, many a soul crying in the darkness, “Oh that I knew

where I might find Him!" And here is the answer, look into the manger to-day. "Lo this is our God." He is the substance of the Father's Thought, "His name is called The Word of God". "He that hath seen Me"—in the deepest sense, in the inmost recesses of His thought and purpose—"hath seen the Father."

I once saw a Christmas card on which the Holy Family were depicted, the Child lying in His Mother's arms, St. Joseph and the shepherds standing by; but the Child is not looking at His Mother or St. Joseph, He is looking past them all with steadfast, childlike, upward gaze, right up to God; the Gift reminding us of the Giver—"I come from God; God sends Me". Yes, He comes from God, He expresses God; He is not a mere messenger but a Message, not only a Prophet but a Revelation; and so, because He is the expression of the Father's Nature and the substance of His Thought, "His name is called The Word of God".

(b) Again "His name is called The Word of God" because He reveals the Father's Character. Human speech undoubtedly is a revelation of character, our experience will bear that out. Notice the value the Bible attaches to human speech. By our words we are justified, by our words condemned; for every "idle word" we must give account. Why is so much importance attached to words? Because language reveals character. "Would you know a man? Then listen to him." "The Word of God" is the expression of the Character of God; He tells us of Him, points to what God is like. The beautiful Christmas picture dawned on a world groping in darkness, on crowds kneeling before the altars of an unknown God; the grotesque misrepresenta-

tions of God, by which the world had been mocked so often and so long, were scattered by the touch of a Child finger, when the picture of the love, faith, sacrifice of His Character broke on the world. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"—that supremely, eternally, is God.

(c) "His name is called The Word of God" because He represents His Father's Will. We all recognize the power of the human will as the fountain-head of thought and activity. We understand how the Bible speaks of it, our Lord's constant references to it. The Church in Baptism, Confirmation, Repentance, Communion, makes constant appeal to the human will. So from man we rise to God. To know His Will is much; to do it is everything. The deepest utterance of the human heart is "Thy will be done"; it is spoken on earth, acted in heaven, breathed from the heart of Christ. Speech is intimately connected with the will—in paralysis, loss of will power is followed by loss of speech; the will is expressed by action and by language. "The Word of God" shows us not only what God is but what He wills. All men, everywhere, are to know what the supreme Will of God is. "Unto you is born a Saviour," that is the answer to the question, "Who is this, and for what purpose has He come?" Would Christ be what He is if He were not true to that purpose? "Unto you" and unto all people, without limit of place or time—"a Saviour". The sound of His "Whosoever" drowns all narrow conceptions of God's Mercy; it is the supreme revelation of His Will.

(d) "The Word of God" is the Channel of Communication between man and God. The purpose of language,

the meaning of all speech, is that it is a channel, a method of communication (not an exclusive one, of course), and He is the channel, the method of communication between man and God. That is one aspect under which the Christmas picture appeals to us. Every child is a channel, universally intelligible, through which we pour out our best thoughts, feelings, and affections; a beautiful link between heart and heart, often an influence reconciling, uniting, peacemaking, bridging the differences that have divided one life from another; and the Holy Child is the channel between God and man, between the old world and the new, between all that is, as we say, dead and all that is in the truest sense alive; the Ladder on earth with its top reaching to heaven, down which the angels with God's messages and blessings are perpetually passing, and up which our prayers and aspirations are continually ascending. As we thank God for this let our prayers and praises mount higher and higher. "Through Jesus Christ our Lord," that is how we are accustomed to end our prayers. Do we mean it? Do we really recognize Him as the Channel, the Link, the Bridgemaker, the Peacemaker, Who is "called The Word of God"?

We pray to-day for many dear to us, some with us, some far away, some of whom we speak as "The Dead," who may really be nearer to us than the living, if only we had faith to see them. Possibly they are permitted to be very near us on a day so full as this of tender memories and associations, human and Divine. Let us remember them before Him Who is the Word, the Channel, the Ladder, the Communication; let us pour out our worship before Him, looking at Him in His

lowly cradle, but hailing Him as "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God". Let us lift up our hearts in thanksgiving for God's unspeakable Gift in Him, because through Him we have access to the Father, and "His name is called The Word of God".





XVIII.

A NEW YEAR QUESTION.



## XVIII.

### A NEW YEAR QUESTION.

(*St. Paul's Cathedral, First Sunday after the Epiphany, 1906.*)

“Lord, and what shall this man do? What is that to thee? Follow thou Me.”—St. John XXI. 21, 22.

IT was just the old impulsiveness of St. Peter reappearing. The scene had changed, the beautiful picture faded out. The threefold confession had been made which disclosed the solid foundation of Christian life and effort, the interpreting power of Christian experience to be *love*. Then after the confession came the test, the revelation, the lifting of the veil, the flashing on the man of the cost of the great confession he had made. It was not in the least what he expected, what his temperament would lead him to desire; it was not in accordance with his burning zeal; it was not to be activity, devotion, service, but calm submission to helplessness, suffering, death. Not for a moment was the brave spirit quelled. “Follow Me,” the call sounded clear and strong, and he was ready to obey; but seeing “the disciple whom Jesus loved” following, he pauses to ask, “What shall this man do?”

In what spirit did he ask the question? Was it in

a spirit of narrow exclusiveness? Was it that he had failed to discover the wideness of the Gospel? There was the difficulty—he was ready for service, eager, devoted, restless, keen; St. John was quiet, reposeful, thoughtful, calm; was there room for both—room for such different types, such contrasted temperaments? If the question meant that, Christ made short work of it, as we feel certain He does of narrow exclusiveness now. There was room for both, room for all; some to work, serve, and suffer; some to think, wait, and pray. To each He held up their ideal, He pointed out the largeness of the Faith. “What is that to thee? Follow thou Me.”

The different types of Apostolic life and character are illustrated in different epochs of the Church. In the earliest ages it was that of St. Peter with his fiery energy. In mediaeval times that of St. Paul with his love so wonderfully balanced by knowledge. Is there not room to-day for another type of Christian life and character? That of a St. John, quiet, patient, thoughtful, throwing all doubts and difficulties into the depths of God’s perfect Love and Wisdom and Power.

It was far more, I think, in a spirit of *tender, loving interest* that St. Peter asked the question. He was to be so honoured. “Thou shalt stretch forth thy hands” did not sound to him as a sentence of death, but as a peal of victory. And here was the man who unlike himself had never denied his Lord, who had leant on Jesus’ Breast, and fathomed the secrets of His Heart—surely some more glorious destiny was reserved for him? It was the rivalry of Christian martyrdom, he was keen for his brother to share also in the glory of suffering. “Lord, and what shall this man do?”

“What shall this man do?” We all join in the Epiphany prayer: “Send out Thy light and Thy truth, let them lead me”. We ask the question each for himself this New Year.

“The night is dark, and I am far from home,  
Lead Thou me on.”

And of others, our dearest and our best, we cannot help asking it. Looking out as I am doing now, on many hundreds of faces, each face a register of character, one realizes the possibilities of this opening year, that what has come to others in the past may come to them, *must* come to some of them, this year—perils, pitfalls, fires of temptation, mists of sorrow, darkness, doubt; glorious opportunities, calls of duty, to the service of humanity, to the work of God.

“What shall this man do?” Let us ask it especially this evening of *our corporate life*. There are two great forces, the social and the solitary, acting collectively and individually, and on the proper balancing of those two all true life depends. Christ illustrated this in His Life on earth; He was the large-hearted Patriot and the Personal Friend, the Churchman and the Son and Brother; He taught that the whole world was bound with the golden cord of love, and yet He stooped to whisper forgiveness in one poor sinner’s ear. They are the twin forces of life, corporate, individual, social, personal. Of these forces the corporate is the highest, because it seems nearest to the Life of God, the highest expression of the social instinct.

What shall this Nation—Church—City—do? Is it an inappropriate time to ask the question, when we are told that we are on the edge of a political crisis unparal-

leled and fraught with the most momentous consequences? "On every moment may hang an eternity." It is a bad cry if it mean panic, suspicion, distrust—bad if we exercise our power with passion and prejudice; but good if it deepen responsibility, dignify citizenship, and drive us to the feet of "Him who sitteth above the waterfloods" of human passions and earthly controversies.

It is said with unthinking persistency that the Church must be dumb at this time; that she has no right to speak; that politics and Religion lie in different spheres of life. I protest against that view. That the Church stands apart from political parties, that she stands for independence of thought and action, is a truism, but one that has not always been remembered. It will be an evil day for the Church of England when she appears to be considering her own interests and position, entrenching herself behind ecclesiastical barriers, turning her back on broader national issues. Claiming to be the Church of the people, she cannot be either ignorant of or indifferent to questions which go to the very heart of the life of the people. National life is not lived in watertight compartments with Religion separate from politics. What is needed now is the conscious and deliberate application of the principles of Christ to every department of life and conduct. Christian men must act, as well in politics as in everything else, with reference to Christian principles. The Church has a message to the State, and to say that she must be dumb at a national crisis is wrong. She is bound to deliver her message with quiet dignity though untrammelled by party ties.

For, after all, what are the ideals of politics? The

responsibility of citizenship, the duty which rests on every man, which he must take up and fulfil without prejudice and passion, of considering the righteousness of the measures he supports, and the character of the men he elects to support them. The nation is not primarily a great commercial concern, but the home of righteousness and peace; and political power is part of the solemn stewardship for which every man must render account to God. Do these questions lie apart from Religion? *What shall this nation do?*

One answer rises above the clamour. She must make for righteousness, she must "seek peace and ensue it," she must "loose the bands of wickedness, and let the oppressed go free". There must be beauty as well as piety; decent homes as well as beautiful churches; lives that are in the best sense human as well as a power which is Divine. There is not one who cannot help her to hold on to the national mission to work out the Purpose of God, to maintain sensitiveness of the national conscience, and proclaim that the law of God covers trade and life. The Christian Church has to ask one question: Who is for righteousness? She has to make the characteristics of her Creed not passion but principle; not party but the people; not confused issues and personal abuse but justice, truth, and charity.

What shall this nation do? Thank God, she can lift up the true ideal of Christian politics; spurn denunciation instead of argument; deny that a man may be less restrained or careful on a political platform than the same man in his office or his home; refuse to stir passions rather than inform ignorance; hear the Voice of Christ rising above the clamour of political strife;

act in His Spirit and Temper, in the fear of God and for the love of the people. Do you say this is Utopian, impossible, unpractical; that a General Election must be on a lower level than this? Then you are writing down the condemnation of Christianity, proclaiming that "common and unclean" which is neither. What shall this nation do? There is but one answer which calls us to the Christian conception of true citizenship, Christ gives it to a country that calls itself Christian, "*Come, follow Me!*"

The question is *personal* as well as national. We ask it of our country, our Church, our friend; must we not also ask it of ourselves? What shall *I* do? There was never more need to ask it than now. Life is so difficult, so complicated, so full of conflicting duties, intersecting paths, tasks to be fulfilled, problems to be solved. Often in the coming year the question will arise: What course shall I take; what decision shall I make? And the answer is that of the unchanging Christ, Who meets us in His eternal youth, when the year is young and our hearts are full, and points us to the one principle that should guide our steps and shape our plans: "Follow thou Me".

"Follow Me." Let nothing deaden the sound of that great Voice. For St. Peter it drowned all other sounds. If it only meant to some of us what it meant to him—the conquering of weakness by strength, the rising from conviction of sin to forgiveness—it would mean a truly happy year! To "follow" means tread where He trod, go where He went, begin where He began, humbling yourself, laying aside some weakness, some sin which is besetting you, taking the broad principles of Religion into



your home, your office, your shop, to uplift and consecrate them. It means to be tempted as He was tempted, perhaps coming straight from some inspiring experience. It means climbing the mountain of Prayer as He climbed it; gathering with Him in the Upper Chamber. And one step more, it means some cross He lays upon us under which we cry :—

“Renew my will from day to day,  
Blend it with Thine and take away  
All that now makes it hard to say  
Thy will be done.”

Or it may be some cross we lay on ourselves, an offering of will, which costs us dear, which hurts, presses hard, is very heavy.

What shall I do? Build up a definite resolve. On this first Sunday of the year, on your knees face the question, possibly with one regretful, backward glance :—

“I was not ever thus nor prayed that Thou  
Shouldst lead me on, . . .”

but *now*, “Lead Thou me on!” for the question has become a personal one: What shall I do? “Follow Me,” and our heart makes its answer: I am ready to go with Thee. Lord, I will follow Thee *whithersoever* Thou goest!



XIX.

THE CORONATION OF THE KING.



## XIX.

### THE CORONATION OF THE KING.

*(Kensington Parish Church, 25 June, 1911.)*

“ Things which cannot be shaken.”—Hebrews XII. 27.

ARE there any such things? Can we say of anything that it cannot be shaken? Is it not true that there are few things which are immovable; nothing in this world and in our life which cannot be shaken? Certainly it looks to us at first sight as if there were none; never before, perhaps, in the history of the world has it looked so more than it does at present. For our age is one of restless movement and incessant change, and the words are more true to-day than they ever have been:—

“ The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.”

Nothing in this world seems to stand still; the march of progress moves steadily on, nothing escapes it, nothing is exempt from it. Systems, habits, institutions, policies, organizations, movements, are changing slowly, swiftly, constantly. “ Behold I make all things new,” the cry is always sounding. With a new colour in life, a new spirit possessing it, new conditions determining it, what is there which cannot be shaken? We look around us as we ask the question.

The solid earth beneath our feet—that seems unshakable as millions of feet tread it and it sustains the fabric of all the cities of the world; and yet, at the bidding of some mysterious force, the whole thing breaks up like a pack of cards, and cities and men are swept away. The world of men—is that unshakable? History repeats itself with wearisome monotony. With earthquakes of revolution, gusts of change, tempests of war, the ebb and flow of earth's dynasties, generation after generation vanishing into the unseen, whole races disappearing, our own friends altering with the march of time, we ourselves, in form, opinion, mind, and character, changing as the years go by—who dare say of human life, even at its greatest and best, that it cannot be shaken? We think of health with its sudden failures, wealth which a City crisis may change in a moment into poverty, physical comforts, material prosperity, personal success and popularity; and we find that the whole history of life is the history of changes sweeping across them all. We can point to none of these things and say, "That cannot be shaken".

In spite, however, of all this restless movement, there are some things which look as though they could not be shaken. Will you think of one or two with me to-day, and then see how from the actual failures of the past and the possibilities of failure in the future, we are driven back and back to that of which alone we can say, "It cannot be shaken".

(a) This vast Empire, so firm in its foundations, so wide in its area, with one-fourth of the globe within its boundaries, with its unnumbered peoples, upon which we are accustomed to say the sun never sets; that

Empire from all parts of which representatives came last week to its heart and centre, knit by the common tie of allegiance and respect to a Sovereign whom all delighted to honour—it is not out of place, here and before God's Altar, to stop and think what that means; for God has given it to England, and God will require it of England; its vastness spells responsibility, its numbers mean a solemn national account; "Of those to whom much is given, much will be required," is true of nations as of men. Think what it means—spread over 12,000,000 of square miles, containing 400,000,000 of human beings, all this vast imperial fabric turning on the hinge of this little island, and all so rapid in its growth. We have been reminded that when Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne, we had just lost Calais, the only foreign possession of the Anglo-Saxon race, and had not one square mile on other shores where we could plant the flag of England; to-day, only three centuries afterwards, one-quarter of the surface of the earth, one-third of the human race, own our Sovereign as King.

That seems to be the most striking feature of last week's celebrations. Great the central figure had to be; but greater still, he would be the first to acknowledge, the Empire over which he rules and whose representatives thronged to do him honour. It is a picture which fills us, not with empty boasting, but with a humbling sense of responsibility, and sets us asking, are we, and how far are we, laying to heart the words of a great man now passed away: "Let us pray to be taught that true Imperialism does not seek to claim God for the Empire, but the Empire for God;

not to make the Empire a religion, but to make the Empire religious". Or in the words of another: "We can be sure that God is on the side of the British Empire, only when we are sure that in ideals and methods the British Empire is on the side of God".

Yes; it was a striking picture. "From under the cold brilliancy of the northern lights; from the golden orchards and smiling groves of the islands of the southern sea; from the sun-scorched deserts of Africa; the bleak steppes of Central Asia; the mighty forests of the North-West; the glens of New Zealand and Tasmania; the hills and plains of our vast Indian Empire"; from every corner of the globe where British foot has trodden, and hands have planted our country's flag, they came to swell the cry, which is more than a cry, for it is a prayer: "God save the King". Surely, as we think of the Empire, we may say, "That cannot be shaken". And yet we are mistaken. Have there been no Empires before? What of the Empires of antiquity—Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome—rivalling or surpassing ours in pomp and power; where are they? What is left; what remains unshaken? The question presses—the question which makes the difference between a true and a false Imperialism—are we helping all this vast fabric of territory, this temple of human lives, to rest upon foundations so deep and firm that they "cannot be shaken"?

(b) The throne and all the throne stands for; is that unshakable? At first sight it seems as though it were; for it means so much, it stands for so much—this Throne of England. It is not only what it is, but what it represents, that makes its power and its value. It is the symbol of the nation's unity, the centre of national life,



the rallying-point of the nation's forces—it is all this and more than this; but none of these things make it so that it cannot be shaken. It stands, as last week's ceremonial reminded us, for the truth of the unchanging Sovereignty of God, who sits above the waterfloods of human passions and human controversies, above the storms of sorrow, strife, and sin, a King for ever and ever. The earthly throne is just a faint image and reflection of the Throne of God. To forget that is to write on it the sentence of its doom. When a king of old commemorated in a dazzling banquet his kingdom's might, wealth, and greatness, and with sacrilegious hands insulted God, swiftly came the writing on the wall, and that kingdom was shaken to its depths. When another spoke with a swelling heart, and said of a city famous above all others: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built . . . by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" there fell sure and swift the judgment of God, and he tottered from his throne and made his home with the beasts of the earth. How different it was last Thursday, when sceptre, orb, and crown, each surmounted by a cross to symbolize the power of the Cross in the national life of England, were consecrated by prayer and praise to be emblems of the greater kingdom of the King of kings. While it is so, when the throne represents the Throne of God, then only dare we trust that it "cannot be shaken".

What, then, are the "things which cannot be shaken," which no time can alter, no change touch, and without which no kingdom, no throne, no pomp and splendour, can long remain unmoved? I submit they are these—Character, Religion, God.

Character—for it is righteousness, not numbers or space or kingship or force, but “Righteousness, that exalteth a nation”. How did they fall, those Empires of the past; what was the secret of their failure? It was failure not of power but of character; lack of righteousness numbered them with the shaken and vanished things. There is no other foundation for national greatness than that which our Lord proclaimed in His first sermon, when He took for its text and subject—character. In that great procession (and what a procession it was, who would stir a step to see it?) of the humble, the meek, the mourner, the persecuted, He gave the front place not to rank, or power, or wealth, but to character. That cannot be shaken. If intemperance, impurity, selfishness, greed, are coupled with loud-sounding boasts and would-be loyal cries, the latter avail nothing. The foundations of that Empire are undermined already. That is not a matter of opinion only, but the teaching of the past. If patriotism means loud words and songs and shouts, and does not mean a spirit of self-sacrifice, then, unless we are prepared to do something to vindicate it and redeem it from being an empty boast, our kingdom will and must be shaken. For that true patriotism let us stand, for that foundation of character which gives it stability, for self-control and cleanness of heart and lip, for comradeship and brotherhood, and that not for our own sake only, but for our country’s sake—for that alone will make it an Empire “which cannot be shaken”.

Religion—could there be a more splendid tribute to the real secret of national stability than last Thursday afforded? It was not the procession with its

moving pomp; it was not the central figures waiting for their crowns or returning crowned; it was not the splendour of the military spectacle, the two Services of the Crown combining to rally round the King to whom both mean so much; it was not the assembly in the Abbey, representative of all offices in Church and State; but the witness it offered to Religion as a dominant national force, which made the chief interest of the occasion. Some people tell us that Religion is played out, that the Church is a reactionary institution, that its forms belong to the childhood of the world, that what remains of it now are mere childish things. And yet, from beginning to end the Coronation was a religious act, conceived in a religious spirit, consummated by the climax of religious observance; for the supreme moment of the service was not the crowning of the King and Queen, but when they laid their crowns aside, and like the humblest of their subjects, bowed low before the King of kings, the One and Only Potentate, Eternal, Invisible, in Whose Presence they were as nothing, and received their Divine Lord's Sacramental Gift.

Yes; Religion is the one thing "which cannot be shaken"; for Religion spells God, and of God alone are the words completely true. It is our hope, our confidence, our joy, that we can say to Him, "Thou art the same, Thy years shall not fail".

"From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same."

He remains unshaken. Of no one else can we say it. It was impossible to take part in last week's ceremony without recalling the crowning, nine years ago, of the

great King whose body now rests at Windsor almost within sound of the shouts of the people and the signals of the guns—so we turn to God and say: “Thou art the Same from one generation to another. Thou art the One Thing which cannot be shaken.”

XX.

THE CORONATION OF THE PEOPLE.



## XX.

### THE CORONATION OF THE PEOPLE.

(*St. Botolph, Bishopsgate, 25 June, 1911.*)

“The Lord hath done great things for us already whereof we rejoice. . . . Turn our captivity, O Lord, as the rivers in the south.”  
—Psalm cxxvi. 4, 5.

THREE figures stood out in last week's solemnity. Two of them were the figure of the Sovereign and the figure of the people. Of the first there is hardly need to speak; rightly and deservedly it stood out in the ceremonial as the human centre round which all revolved. All eyes were fixed on him, all hearts beat with loyalty towards him, on all lips were hopes and prayers for him, and all voices accepted him as King. But there was another figure, not so prominent as his, and yet surely no less important—more important, we may be certain, in his own eyes than himself. It was represented by that vast concourse that lined the streets; embodied not in the rank and wealth which filled the Abbey walls or in those more or less prosperous persons who at considerable cost occupied favoured positions on the route; but rather typified by the multitudes that through the hours of the night and early morning swept up in their thousands, counting no toil, no discomfort, no effort any-

thing, if only they could look upon their King. It was the figure of the People.

Yes ; the importance of last Thursday's scene, lay not only in the greatness of the Sovereign, but in the greatness of the people. The King is chosen by the people, the King reigns by the will of the people, he cannot occupy the Throne but by their goodwill, his Crown is their gift, he takes it at their hands. "There is no Divine right by which the eldest son of the Monarch becomes King without the assent of the people." The very first act of the Coronation ceremonial is to challenge their assent, to ask if they are prepared to do homage, to accept and recognize him as their Sovereign Lord. It is difficult to over-estimate the importance of this principle, for on it depends the security of the Throne of England :—

"Broad-based upon the people's will  
And compassed by the inviolate sea."

It binds them to the Throne and the Throne to them, as no power of compulsion could ever do. He is their own, as no other principle could make him ; by their own will and choice they have placed him where he is, and firmer and stronger than any army round the Throne, as the foundations of the stability of the Sovereign's rule, is the great fact that he is the people's King, they have placed him there.

That principle means responsibility, quite as much as security ; the people are responsible for the King and he for them. They are responsible for him, for they have chosen him ; their duty stands quite clear—to accept him, serve him, be loyal and true to him. They must pray for him, not only at this Coronation time ; but day by day, year in and year out. How many do this ? For



how many are the prayers in the Prayer Book services, for our Sovereign Lord the King, realities? Realizing the awful loneliness of the man who wears the crown, they must share with him the burden they have placed upon him. True Imperialism must mean to them what it means to him, not a word to conjure with, not a party cry or a selfish foolish boast; but the determination of the people to share with their Sovereign in the duty of making the Empire over which he rules worthy of him and worthy of the best in them.

The principle means also the responsibility of the King for the people. The ceremonial of last Thursday was literally, of course, the Coronation of the King, but it was also, in a sense, the Coronation of the people. He was crowned as their representative and it is not too much to say that they were crowned in him. That Crown, the symbol for him of the completeness of human authority, the climax of all earthly power and position, must surely mean for the people a growing completeness in their lives, and in the conditions and circumstances under which those lives are lived. That the King desires to make it so, none of us can have a shadow of doubt; but what about those round the Throne; those who gathered within the Abbey; those who counted no money wasted if they could only secure themselves privileged positions on the route of the processions? What about ourselves? Are we prepared to make the Coronation of the King the coronation of the people; are we prepared to strive that the reign of our newly-crowned King shall see the lessening of cruel wrongs, the removal of bitter grievances, the bridging not the widening of the gulf which yawns between the classes,

and a determined effort to make the poor less poor, even if the rich have to be less rich?

Is that what it is all to mean? One cannot ask the question without misgiving, if it be true, as there is some ground to fear it is true, that in such a year as this full of thankfulness and joy, among scenes of extraordinary magnificence and almost wild extravagance, full of a luxury and splendour, perhaps never equalled before—if it be really true that side by side with this, the contribution of London to the sick and suffering in the hospitals should have seriously diminished—we are face to face with a national disgrace, a cruel wrong not to the sufferers only, but to the Sovereign and his Queen who are ever ready to send out their sympathy to those in sorrow and need. For is not this our hope that, during this reign, some blots on our English life may be lessened or removed; that the power of the plutocracy, which as a ruling force seems to have taken the place of the aristocracy, may be dethroned; that the false standard of wealth may be levelled and the true standard of character raised in its place; that behind all the blaze and glitter of society magnificence, may be less and less discernible the crouching figure of the out-cast and the destitute; so that squalid homes, sweated labour, holidays that through unthinkable selfishness are made to mean not days of pleasure but of loss and want, may become more and more things of the past; that all may recognize that the Coronation of the King, and the completeness of his power, shall also mean the coronation of the people and the bettering of their lives.

I said that three figures stood out in last week's solemnity. The third towers above the other two. It

was not the fault of the Coronation ceremonial if that is forgotten, lost sight of, or ignored. If the King rules by the will of the people, he rules also, and even more, by the Grace of God. The Coronation did not make him King, he was that already, heralds proclaimed him months ago; "its purpose was to make him God's King". It was a religious ceremony, although irreligious people may forget that it was so, and miss the whole meaning of it. It was a great solemnity; the Church, not the State, was the chief agent in it; the place was not a Hall of Parliament, but the Abbey Church of St. Peter; the service was in the hands not of a State official but of the chief pastor of the realm. What more could have been done than was done, by moving music and stately ritual, to impress on all that it was really a religious act, "The hallowing of the King"; and the whole ceremony found its climax in the one great Divine Service—the most solemn act of our Religion.

The King reigns by the Grace of God. Let that be forgotten, and any monarch's reign drops to a lower level and loses the secret of its permanence and the force of its power. Surely these are great words in which one reigning monarch of Europe told the nation he rules: "I regard my position as appointed for me by God, and in this consciousness I daily labour. I rejoice that I have placed my whole Empire, people and army, as well as myself and my house, beneath the Cross and under the protection of Him Who said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away'." Was it supposable, he asked, that the endless toil and tasks, the tremendous responsibility of kingship, could be supported alone and unrelieved,

as they would be if this conviction were not present? An English King may find it harder to say such words, but that they express the conviction of our Sovereign Lord King George, no one can for a moment doubt. The test of a reign is in the power of that spirit which will make the country more, not less, religious; so that the old landmarks of Bible, Church, and Sunday, may be not removed or weakened, but strengthened and established, and that the nation—and therefore every individual in it, man, woman, and child, yes, every one of us in our own little sphere with our own store of influence—may help King George to do what the Great Queen, who ruled over us for so many years, said she longed to do: “To lay the Crown of England at the Saviour’s feet”.

If that be so, then indeed we can echo the Psalmist’s cry. Louder and clearer than the ringing acclamations will sound the words of thanksgiving for all that God has done for this Empire, for ourselves. “The Lord hath done great things for us already,” but with thanksgiving must mingle the sound of prayer as we realize all that remains to be done, all that we hope and pray this reign will see accomplished, all that is calling for reform, for readjustment, for the betterment of human lives, for the increase of true Religion. “Turn our captivity O Lord, as the rivers in the south.”

XXI.

SOME REVELATIONS OF SUFFERING.



## XXI.

### SOME REVELATIONS OF SUFFERING.

(*St. Paul's Cathedral, Holy Week, 1903.*)

#### 1. "LUX."

"At evening time it shall be light."—Zechariah xiv. 7.

OVER one of the porches of an old Norman Minster is placed a stone cross, on each arm of which a single word is written ; each word ends with the letter which itself represents the Cross : Lux, Lex, Pax, Rex ; the Illumination, the Judgment, the Peace, and the Majesty of the Passion.

To-day we will consider the first word—*Lux*, Light. How paradoxical it is ! It appears to be the direct antithesis and contradiction of the Passion. Could anything be in more startling contrast to, or clash more with it ? Light—but it is all darkness. Light !—with all the mysteries of life and death centring round the Cross ; with the world in revolt against its God ; the world ready, if it could, to kill its God ; all cruelty paling before the cruelty which nailed His hands and feet to the Cross, and broke His Heart ; all folly and wickedness fading before the horror of that wicked choice, "Not this Man but Barabbas !" Surely never

since the world began had there been such darkness as that round the Cross.

There was the darkness of the mysteries of Sorrow, Parting, Suffering, Death, closing in round that lone Figure on the Cross, wringing from Him that cry of dereliction which brings Him so near to every one of us. There was the darkness of ignorance, on which He based the pleading Prayer of Calvary; and there was the inner darkness of that conflict between the Flesh and the Spirit, of which Gethsemane reveals something to us, a darkness which brings Christ so very near to every man in whom that struggle is raging now.

"Darkness over all the earth," and yet "Lux," light, the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy, "At evening time it shall be light". It is easy to imagine the kind of picture that must have been in the prophet's mind. A dull grey day at sea, the slow hours dragging their weary length along in the monotony of an unbroken gloom; no sparkle on the water, no patches of sunlight, just the sea moaning on like a discontented spirit. Morning and afternoon pass and evening comes; and then there is a change, a lightening of the gloom, a breaking of the mist, first one streak of light and then another, until the whole sky is a mass of gold and crimson, and the sea—like a child with its fit of passion past—is sparkling with merriment in the sunshine, and "At evening time it is light".

It was true of the world when Christ came to the world. It was true when He hung upon the Cross. "There was darkness over all the earth," everywhere, round everything; and yet—as of old, when in the darkness of Egypt there was light in the homes of Israel—



there was the light of the Cross. God said, "Let there be light, and there was light". In the darkness of the Passion comes the illumination of the Cross. What was the light? In what sense was the prayer, "Lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us," answered in the Passion?

(a) It flung *light on God*. Was that not needed? "Clouds and darkness round about Him." "Who, by searching, can find out God?" "Show us the Father." So the old cries sounded. What answers are there still? Nature tells us something about God. "I asked the lakes, the mountains, the rivers: Are you my God?" says St. Augustine, "and they answered: No. If you are not God, tell me something about Him. And all—streamlets, lakes, mountains, rivers, answered with one great voice: We are not God, but He made us". Yes, Nature tells of God; but man wants to know something more than Nature tells—not only what God has done, but what God is like. It is a confused medley of answers that Nature gives. How difficult, how impossible, it is to discover in created things the real Character of God, or to obtain any harmonized conception of Him! So there dawned the new Creation, the glory of God revealed in Jesus Christ—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father".

What was wanting to complete the beauty of that picture, and to bring it home to the hearts of men? Only one thing—suffering; the Representative Man had not yet known suffering, His visage was unmarred by pain, His eyes undimmed by sorrow. What was to bridge the gulf between Him and humanity, but the common fellowship of pain? In the intensity of

His Anguish He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" *Why*, but that out of darkness He might fling light on God, and make the world know and understand Him better. The Incarnate Son revealed the Father in the eloquent language of suffering; God translated Himself into the agony of human pain, in order that humanity might know Him better, might understand Him more completely. While Nature with her seeming contradictions had failed to make Him plain, while history unrolled its record of the inscrutable ways of Providence, He suffered that He might solve problems and unravel mysteries, that the whole world might say, "Lo, this is our God, He will come and save us".

Light on God, and (b) *Light on man*. Was that not needed too? Was no flash of light necessary to show man who and what he is? He finds it difficult to understand God; does he not find it difficult to understand himself? He is a complex being with a continual civil war going on within him. He is body, mind, and spirit; now the body with its needs asserts itself, now the mind demands that he should say, "I think, therefore I am"; now the spirit rises superior to both, untouched by time, disease, or death. Which part of that nature is king; which is the heir to the throne of his life? It was the purpose of Christ's Life and Death to answer that question. He cared for the body as no one else cared for it—the pathos of the Passion is largely due to the fact that He suffered in the Body, Who ministered so tenderly all His life to the body; He appealed to the mind, His crucial question was, "What think ye of Christ?" but the chief value of His Life was what He thought and did for the soul. "Whether is it easier to

say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or, Arise, take up thy bed and walk?" So He emphasizes the superior importance of the soul; and on Calvary, in the language of suffering, at the price of blood, He proclaimed the *value of the soul*.

Come to the Cross this week to see, to realize, the contrast between the revelation of the Divine and the revelation of the human—God and yourself—the Humanity of God and the Divinity of Man; to understand better what you are and what God is. You need not busy yourself in building altars in your life to the unknown and unknowable. Come to the Cross and know God Who there reveals Himself. In suffering and pain He makes Himself plain; there is something recognizable, something that answers the cry of the centuries. The Passion reveals God.

Does it not also reveal yourself? Not only in your weakness, but in your strength; not only in your failures, but in your possibilities; showing you not only where you have failed, but where you can succeed. Come to the Cross; it throws light on God, and it illumines man. "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" "He loved me and gave Himself for me"; then how wonderfully precious I must be, what possibilities are stored in me! God thought me worth that; how dare I belittle myself, degrade myself, defile myself, pollute myself?

(c) The Passion throws *light on human life and character*. "Perfect through suffering"—something of that perfection may be ours through the contemplation of His sufferings. The school of discipline has its classrooms of temptation, suffering, bereavement, loss; has

it no place for the reverent contemplation of the Passion? There you will see the utmost beauty of character revealed; the crushed flower breathes out its fragrance, and in that contemplation there is discipline moral and spiritual.

A great deal depends on the attitude of men and women towards the Passion; it has a reactionary force on their life and character. It ought not to be a morbid contemplation, but an intelligent perception. "I will stand and see this great sight why the bush is not consumed," and on your darkened life and shadowed character there shall be light. For what is the Passion? A fact, thank God for it! But not only a fact of history, before which your powers of intellect are arraigned; it is a fact of conscience which raises moral issues, which interrogates and reviews you. It lets in the light, examines you, not intellectually as to what you think of Christ, but morally, What is your attitude towards Christ? What is the inner meaning of your contemplation of Him this week?

What is your attitude towards the Passion? From that comes the real force and beauty of Holy Week. It is a time for moral decision and spiritual choice. Am I or am I not choosing Christ? There can be neutrality of intellect, but not moral or spiritual neutrality. "Shall I release unto you Barabbas or Jesus, which is called Christ?" The question is ringing through the country and into every heart this week, and you must choose which you will have. What does the answer mean?

It means that you have chosen the Light. It means that in that amazing contrast you will have realized

God, you will have realized yourself. It means that at His feet—accepting all that His guidance may mean to you—you pray, “Lead kindly Light, . . . lead Thou me on”. It means that on the darkness of your self-abasement, your perplexity, your blurred imperfect character, the light of God in the face of Jesus Christ has showed that at eventide with you there is light.

## 2. “LEX.”

“And one shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends.”—Zechariah xiii. 6.

“LEX,” the second word on the old stone cross, the second aspect of the Passion, let us see how the vision of the prophet bears upon it. The angels are waiting within the gates for the Lord’s return. How will He come? Will He come victorious and resplendent? Will He come as He went with angel escort? No; He comes not as He went, but with the Wound-marks of the Passion in feet and hands and side; and as they perceive Him with those strange signs of suffering on Him, the question thrills through the ranks, “What are these wounds in Thine hands?”

“Lex,” the *perpetual judgment* of the Passion—let us try and realize that to-day. The Passion is an abiding fact, a revelation, an influence; but it is a judgment, not of the past alone, but of the present. The Wounds of Christ are pledges of love, encouragements to prayer; but they have a sadder, severer aspect for us than that. They proclaim the Lex, the judgment of the Cross. We are face to face now with the Passion of the Lord,

not as the window of revelation letting in light on God and man, on life and character; but with the Cross as the seat of judgment before which the whole world is arraigned.

How paradoxical it sounds to talk about law in connection with the Passion! *Law?* Why it was lawlessness, revolt. It looked like wild, reckless anarchy; all the forces and passions of mankind seemed to be let loose, breaking down all the barriers of decency and justice. Every form of human wickedness was there, violating all that is most sacred and dear. The elementary principles of justice were reversed, purity clouded by shame, holiness blasphemed, love basely requited. His trials were travesties of justice, before which the worst travesties of human justice fade into insignificance. There were the lying witnesses, the stream of slander, the wicked perversion of the noblest words He spake. We can see the "Lux" shining on the wickedness of men, but no "Lex". And yet there is another aspect which proclaims the Judgment of the Passion; which makes the Cross as real a tribunal as any Great White Throne set up in the heavens. Christ emphasized this when He wept over the coming ruin of Jerusalem; He saw His own words, and works, and wonders coming up as witnesses against her. When He pictured her destiny He saw the judgment of the Cross.

This was the aspect He emphasized when the cry of the Greeks sounded in His ears, "Sir, we would see Jesus". "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified;" . . . all at once He pauses, the very tone of His voice alters as the shadow creeps across His soul. Again He speaks, "Now is the judgment of this world,"

and what He proclaims is the Lex, the judgment of the Cross.

Lux, Lex,—in that order the words appear on the cross; and I ask you to notice what a perfectly natural order it is. Light implies judgment. “They will be judged by the light they had;” we say that of the heathen at home or abroad, and it is a consolation to us to say it; but do we remember that we may be uttering the condemnation of ourselves? “If I had not come they would not have had sin, but *now* they have no cloak for their sin.” There is light and so there is the responsibility of light; where there is Lux there is Lex.

Is it not so with all those rays of light which, as we saw yesterday, God has flung on the world? Nature is like a window showing flashes of the light of God, but that light is itself a judgment. You and I cannot be as if we had received no gifts of Nature, discovered no laws, no treasures in the world of Nature. The Divine Commandments, what a judgment they are! “Let not God speak to us lest we die.” The Incarnate life—the aged man in the Temple when he received our Lord in his arms, did not speak of the glory of His mission, His profound Love and Pity, the wonders of His miracles, but said, “This Child is set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel”. Our life is judged by the light which God has put within it: the light of conscience. Talent, influence, opportunity, privilege, the human relationships in which we stand, the memory of purer days—all this spells judgment.

What follows? The judgment of the Cross and Passion witnesses to the fact of the *seriousness of sin*. We may say there is no need for that; the witness is



plain enough, it is always with us; there is no place and time where sin is not, even here in this inspiring place. The holiest souls have found temptations, tormenting temptations, within the walls of the House of God. (It was in church that Mephistopheles whispered poisonous suggestions to the praying Marguerite.) Sin is familiar, terribly familiar to us; but does not that rob it of its reality? The fiendish work of some novels and some plays is to familiarize young lives with evil, and then to excuse it. Yes; we are familiar with evil, and therefore we think less about the seriousness of sin!

God knew this and said, "I will show what I think of sin". So He sent various judgments: earthquakes, plagues, famines. The world trembled for a time, and then went on as before. Then God said, "I will try again, I will judge it in the Passion, reveal it by the Cross; they cannot make light of this judgment". As a boy beginning to give way to habits of intemperance or impurity may be shown the wrecked life of an inebriate or a maniac who has become so by giving way to his passions, so God said, "I will show the awfulness and seriousness of sin by the worst thing it can do".

The judgment of the Cross is *God's measurement of evil*—His perpetual measurement of it. The world's measures vary, God's are eternal, unalterable, His standard the unchanging standard of the Passion. At the turn of a winding mountain pass in Switzerland is a life-sized figure of the Crucified, over which is written, "Sinner, behold thy work". All at once into busy, thoughtless, careless lives comes the vision of the Cross, and the judgment of the Passion is revealed.



Lastly, the Passion reveals the *forms* and *principles* of evil. The whole circle of evil closed in round the Cross. The horror of the Passion was the awful, unnatural, close contact with sin that it implied. Can you imagine a worse hell than life in filthy, degraded surroundings, among horrible sights and sounds? Try and think what Christ must have felt when all the forms of evil crowded round Him. Evil in all its shapes and forms—the falsehood of Caiaphas, the sensuality of Herod, the weakness of Pilate, the mere emotionalism of the women, the cowardice of Peter, the treachery of Judas. The crowd were all being judged; Christ was the Judge, His Throne of Judgment the Cross; before it the whole evil of the world was arraigned.

Come and stand before the Cross and see if our sins are not represented there. God is judging sin, your sin and my sin. We have our share in the Passion; the principles of evil live on and are reproduced now. They are eternal principles—the expediency of Caiaphas repeated in politics; the vacillation of Pilate in the Church; the mockery of Herod in smart society; the treachery of Judas whenever conscience is sold for purse, or place, or power. You and I know that they are lasting principles; we find them at work in ourselves. We are cowards, asking not “Is it right?” but “Is it expedient? Will it be popular?” Is it I, Lord? Is it I?

So the Cross of Jesus is God’s judgment not on the forms of evil alone, but on its principles. On the *indifference*, which is the characteristic sin of to-day, in matters of faith, worship, personal service. It was indifference which broke Christ’s heart. The practical rejection of the Lord is going on now, not only in the

slums but in fashionable society; and alas! history tells us that "when nations perish, corruption begins at the top". We are judged in the Passion of the Lord. All through this week we contrast two figures: the scowling, unattractive robber, and the gentle, tender, strong Christ. The Judge passes from one to the other, in his indecision waiting for the people to relieve him of his responsibility, until the cry breaks out, "*Not this Man, but Barabbas!*" As I reminded you yesterday, the appeal of the Passion is to the moral nature of man. When the choice is forced on us, as it is oftener than we think, when we have to choose for or against Christ, I hope we shall recall the prophet's vision with its question, "Lord, what are these wounds?" and I trust we may hear the answer, the Judgment of the Passion, spoken by the voice of the Saviour of men: "My child, they are the marks of the evil principles to which you have yielded; they are those with which you yourself have often wounded Me in the house of My friends".

### 3. "PAX."

"Then . . . came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side."—St. John xx. 19, 20.

"PAX," the third word on the stone cross over the old Norman Minster, emphasizes another aspect of the Passion, another paradox of the Cross of the Divine Redeemer. With what a welcome sound it must have come to the disciples; remorse-stricken, nervous, strained—meeting with locked doors for fear of the Jews; the torturing memories of Christ's farewell words of peace

awakening mocking echoes in their hearts! In the darkness of Gethsemane they had parted from their Lord, and scattered; now the old spell had drawn them back. A whirlwind of emotion was passing through their souls, when all at once He stands amongst them with the old salutation, whispering to the troubled sea, "Peace be still"; "Peace be unto you!"

"*Pax!*" "He shewed unto them His hands and His side." What possible connection could there be between the words and the action? What could be more paradoxical? And yet It is to the Passion that He ascribes the Peace. He comes back with the signature of that treaty of peace written in His hands and side. There did not seem to be much peace in the Passion, rather it was the breaking of the storm. The old man in the Temple looked across the sky of the Child-life to where the clouds were gathering for Him and His Mother; and on the Cross the storm broke. But the vessel, lost to sight in the storm, again appears, though with rigging torn and battered hull, creeping back to port with the dignity of a struggle that has found its goal.

Peace, what peace? It seemed just the opposite—the clash of battle, the noise of the fray, the clamour—what peace was there? It sounds paradoxical and yet something appears to tell us it is true. "Peace," after all what more appropriate word could there be? It was His own word, He had almost created it, He had brought it into the world of practical reality. The world had never really known peace; it had known the glory of victory, but nothing of peace except as a negative thing with no glory about it. It knew nothing of

that "Peace, perfect Peace," which tired men and women could possess if they chose.

Christ came and whispered peace. His very title was "Prince of Peace"; the aristocracy of His kingdom were the peace-makers; His greeting was "Peace," His farewell "Peace"; and now the Passion means *our* peace. What message could be half so welcome to us as the message of peace? I do not say to all of us, or to all at once—the best things of life seem to vary for us as life goes on. Our conceptions of God develop and modify; so the God of our childhood is not quite the same as the God of our youth, or the God of our youth the same as the God of our declining years. Some love best the glory of the sunrise, some that of the sunset. So with the necessities of life, they are not for you, my young brothers, exactly what they will be in twenty years time; but there will come a day when the sweetest word you can hear will be "Peace". That will be the fruit of the Passion which your tired, perhaps bleeding, hands will stretch out to reach.

It is told of Dante that after many wanderings he reached a monastery and stood before the door. Thrice they asked him, "What wouldest thou?" and he broke the silence at last with the one word, "*Peace*". There will come a time when you have wandered far, had your glimpses of the other life, the poetry of Religion, the romance of life—you will come to stand before the Cross, and to the question, "What wilt thou?" you will answer, *you* also, "Peace".

What then is the "Pax" of the Passion? How does the Crucified give peace? (a) He makes it, He purchases it, He conveys it. Peace is the first outcome of

the Passion. "Let not your hearts be troubled." "My peace I leave with you." Then the curtain falls. It rises on the tumult of the Passion and falls on the Figure of the Crucified. When it again rises we see Him in the Upper Chamber, with the marks in hands and feet and side. As we saw yesterday, these Wounds are the pledges of love, the encouragement to prayer, God's measurements of sin; but they are also the purchase-money of peace. "Peace be unto you," then "He showed them His hands and His side". Christ made peace, He purchased peace. Poor tired soul, torn by conflicting wills, it is done. You have not to negotiate it, not to ask how it can be made; that is answered. The message of this week to you is the word in golden letters on the cross—"Pax," in spite of what you have been and what you are. Peace be unto you!

(b) Christ made *peace with God*. What was the exact position? A river, and on each bank one standing; on one side the sunlight, on the other the shadow; on one side God, on the other man; and between them a great deep gulf, the river widening as it flows. What can join them? For answer One steps down into the stream, saying, "I can join God and man, for I am both Man and God". Divinity touches Humanity in Him. The waters close over His head, the cold stream chills Him, but He still touches either shore, and when the gulf is bridged and the world rings with the cry that proclaims the completion of the work, He says, "I have made peace".

Peace with God—do you know it? Why not? He has made it. You know what it is to make peace with man. Perhaps you once had a friend who was estranged

from you, although he had been your greatest friend. Some one dear to both made peace between you, the trouble was cleared away, the misunderstanding removed; it is done, it is all right, as it used to be; you feel the relief, you thank God that you are again at peace. Do you know that peace with God? Again why not? The whisper of "Peace be unto you" has never died away.

It is well to remember sometimes—and if it is sometimes wise it is surely so now—that the "ministry of reconciliation" is the echo of this peace. When the burdened soul comes in Christian liberty, with no un-English compulsion, but because it believes the Church is not mocking it when she says God has given power to His ministers to declare and pronounce absolution; when the minister pointing to Him Who can alone give forgiveness, says, "My son, go in peace!" the echoes of the voice of Jesus are heard. It is His Pardon and His Peace.

(c) *Peace* not only with God, but *in man*. You and I know the disturbing causes which trouble our peace. Conscience awakens—the opiates with which we have lulled it lose their effect and end in insomnia. Jesus has said to us more than once in strange and varied ways, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks". Now He says, "Peace, be still!" and in the conscience there is "a great calm". Circumstances sometimes seem to make peace impossible. We say it is not our fault, but that of our circumstances, the conditions of our life and home, the thousand worries and anxieties which wear us. Christ knew the power of circumstances. He foresaw all the storms which would agitate the Apostles'

lives—persecution, trial, loss. On the surface of His own Life was tempest, in the depth calm. He told them they would have tribulation in the world; but their task was to conquer the world, and not be conquered by it. “Without Me ye can do nothing.” “In Me ye shall have peace.”

That is the message of the Cross to-day; who does not need it? Who can live without it? “Pax vobiscum” is the message; and blessed indeed is he who, looking up into his Lord’s face, can answer from his own experience, “O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace”. “Thou dost keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee.”

#### 4. “REX.”

“Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art Thou a king? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.”—St. John xviii. 37.

“REX,” the last word on the stone cross of the Norman Minster, and surely the grandest of the four! Lux, the light of Revelation; Lex, the seat of Judgment of the Passion; Pax, its whisper of Peace; and above all Rex, the throne of glory, the Royalty of Christ, the *majesty of the Passion*.

It appears most startling, most paradoxical, in glaring contrast to the scene. There seems little to-day or to-morrow to witness to His Kingship. “Art Thou a king then?” We almost hear the echo of Pilate’s cry. His crown of thorns, His sceptre a reed, His coronation robe a soldier’s cast-off cloak, the little group of Disciples the only subjects of His Kingdom. We picture the awful surroundings of the Cross and we ask, “Where is the majesty of the Passion? Where is the King?”



And yet there were flashes of royalty; even His enemies felt He was a King. In the early hours of to-morrow we shall see Him at the mercy of the weak, vacillating man, who beside Him was like a broken reed beside a massive oak; we see Him hurried up the marble steps under the gilded roof of the palace, and Pilate interested and touched asking, "Art Thou a king?" Thou, poor weary outcast, pale lonely prisoner, with no traces of royalty, art Thou a king? Where are the signs of His royalty? We can see it when the wise men kneel before Him; when He is transfigured; when His hand is stretched out over the sea; when He heals the sick; when He touches the bier; but here and now? "Art Thou a king?" "Ah, there is a royalty you cannot understand; it lies not in the realm of falsity and shadow, but in the sphere of truth, righteousness, purity, and peace; in that kingdom I am a King."

How unconscious was Pilate's witness to the royalty of Jesus! Again and again we trace the unconscious witness of His foes. "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." "His blood be on us and on our children!" "Behold the Man!" so they unconsciously witnessed to the glory of the world-wide Atonement. So now when He is mocked, robed, crowned, there is whispered all unconsciously the truth which has been thundered out by the centuries ever since, "King of kings, and Lord of lords".

What is the "Rex" of the cross?

(a) The majesty of sorrow, the royalty of Suffering. Is there such a thing? Over against the weakness and the pain there is the glory which belongs to sorrow. The aristocracy of the spiritual world are the sufferers



of the world, and at the head of their legions stands Christ. There is a wonderful witness for God in suffering. Not that I wish for a moment to associate the idea of sadness with God, or to endorse the libel which says, "Tears are Divine, mirth is of the earth". We have had too much of that in the past, and are reaping the harvest of that seed now. God is the happy God, rejoicing in Himself and His works; yet in sorrow there is a wonderful witness to God.

It is a mere commonplace to say that sorrow sometimes drives us to God. We go too often only when we are driven, and nine times out of ten we are driven by tears. The Majesty of the Passion is its glorious witness to the purpose of suffering as the revelation of God in the individual life. Surely it is in the revelation of purpose that the majesty of suffering lies, and the revelation of purpose is the revelation of God. To know there *is* a purpose—not perhaps to see it or understand it but to be sure that it is there—that is the majesty of sorrow. It is the gloom relieved by the glory of the purposeful God.

The majesty of suffering is in the discipline of character; it gives the completing touch to life. "Perfect through suffering"—it means that character ripens under it as in no other way. There is a strange difference in the tone, the voice, the helpfulness of the man who has been forced into the class-rooms of the school of sorrow. Who has not found it so? Suffering is the school of sympathy, through which we must pass if we would be among the sympathisers of the world. The majesty of suffering lies largely in this: It witnesses to God and it disciplines man.

(b) Again I ask, what is the majesty of the Passion? And I answer, the majesty of Freedom. There is a glory in freedom, such as no bondage can know anything about; few of us deny it although we often ignore the corresponding responsibility. There was no freedom so unfettered as when Christ "gave Himself"; it is its voluntariness which makes the glory of the Passion. You remember the scene in the Garden, when the Disciple, full of impulsive devotion, had drawn his sword; and Christ rebuked him and said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" As He speaks the vision opens before Him; the grip of His captors is on His wrists, but He feels it not; He hears the fluttering of the angels' wings, sees the flashing of their swords as they hurry to His release; one word, one effort of His Will, and the Cross will vanish and all the world proclaim Him King. He has but to pray, "Father, send them," and it is done; but He will not, He shuts His eyes to the dazzling prospect. The freedom of the Passion is in its bondage. "No man taketh My life from Me, I lay it down of Myself."

The majesty of His freedom—can we share it? Much of sorrow comes involuntarily, we just have to lie still and bear it with no element of choice in the matter; but there are times when we are free with something of the freedom of the Passion; times when a man binds himself, makes a rule for himself. Is it weakness to submit to rule? to prepare for your Easter Communion because your Church says, "Every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one"? Is it weakness

for the tempted man to sign the pledge which puts temptation out of his reach? For the youth whose passions are easily kindled to make a rule against certain books and plays? I say it is not weakness but *strength*; it is the echo of the cry, "I lay it down of Myself".

(c) The majesty of the Passion is the majesty of Truth. Was it not on that that Christ based His claim to royalty? "Yes; I am a King, and My kingdom is the Kingdom of Truth. Unlike some thrones founded on violence, robbery, and wrong, Mine is on unshaken foundations. For this cause came I into the world." The word truth went home; in Pilate there awoke memories and experiences; he had indulged in the speculations of his time, had had his theories and views of things, but now he had tired of them and given them all up in cynical despair; and lo, this prisoner Christ speaks of truth as if He owned it, ruled it. "What is truth?" he asks; and the question could not be answered because the life of the man who asked it and the spirit of the question made it impossible. It is not every man who can discover the majesty of truth. Let us ask to-day that we may be "of the truth" so that we may find Him in the kingdom of truth.

(d) The majesty of Mercy. "Art Thou a king?" It is to a king that the royal prerogative of mercy belongs. Here we get to the great centre of the picture, the heart of the matter, the Cross a greater and more glorious Throne of Mercy than the world has ever known. There each suppliant kneels; the sceptre is stretched out; the sentence reversed, the reprieve granted. Mercy, *mercy*—may the mercy of the Passion be for all, for

each one; for every sin of every sinner living now, or who has lived, or will live! Let it be our prayer to-morrow for others and for ourselves.

“Lord in this Thy mercy’s day,  
Ere it pass for aye away,  
On our knees we fall and pray.

. . . . .  
By Thy night of agony,  
By Thy supplicating cry,  
By Thy willingness to die.”

“By Thy Cross and Passion,” oh King of kings, *have mercy!*

XXII.

SOME REVELATIONS OF DEATH.



## XXII.

### SOME REVELATIONS OF DEATH.

(*St. Paul's Cathedral*, 1903.)

#### GOOD FRIDAY ADDRESSES.

“Death as the revealer.”

WHAT a strange revealer is death! It is quite true that life has its revelations also, that there are exceptional moments in life which have a revealing power. Accident, bereavement, failure, success, bring to light what is under the surface, but there is no revealer like death. That is partly why we want to know the last words of great men; it is not only from morbid curiosity. Things are laid bare then, as at no other time, character is made known, the real man stands out clear and visible.

Death reveals three things in particular. First thought—that silent, ceaseless stream, of which others know so little even in the case of their nearest and dearest. Death comes and reveals that, the strange powers and workings of the mind flash out. Then character—how it reveals that! Sickness may cloud it for a time, but only for a time; in the dark stormy day comes the moment when the sun shines out, and often in dying the clouds clear away from the character; it

stands out with the old sweet temper and thoughtfulness for others, and we know it as we never knew it before. Then work—for in that fire flickering out, every man's work is tried of what sort it is; the artificial and worthless drop away, and the motive, purpose, and aim are made clear.

On this Death Day of our Lord, let us try and look for the revelations of the Cross. Death was the great revealer of Christ; how wonderfully the light is flung on what He thought and did! In each of the Seven Words there is a ray of light; let us look, listen, and remember. In His last sermon, as in his first, He proclaims the blessing of character and conduct. Let us ask for power to make these Words our own.

We should approach them:—

(a) Reverently. There is the danger of over-familiarity, and it is possible in the annual commemoration of the Passion to forget their solemnity. We guard the last words of our loved ones, we remember them, but we find it difficult to speak about them. We must not forget that, like the burning bush, the unquenchable Love of the Cross is "Holy Ground". We must tread softly, put all distracting thoughts aside, "Take off the shoes from our feet".

(b) With clear intelligence. We do not need to dwell on the material and physical, that may be morbid and emotionally dangerous. If the words of the Evangelists cannot bring home to us the consciousness and realization of Christ's Sufferings, how can the words of any other man? "I will turn aside and see why the bush is not consumed;" we must echo that cry intelligently. Before all other questions we must ask:—



“ *Who is it that suffers?* ” and there is but one answer—the answer that gives its truest meaning to it all—“ *God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God* ”.

(c) With perfectly simple naturalness. It seems almost sacrilege to do otherwise, to twist them into meanings they may never have been intended to bear, to place on them constructions of our own, to try to be original. The Words are so natural, so entirely what we should have expected from an absolutely Perfect Human Being.

(d) Devotionally. It is possible to make a great mistake about that. We are not here to listen to a series of short sermons, we are here for devotion. I shall try to suggest, guide, and lead you in your thoughts and prayers; but in the silences, if not in the addresses, God calls you and offers to teach you Himself. We need a simple, teachable spirit, “ *Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth* ”.

## I.

### ABSOLUTION.

What a scene it was on which our Lord looked down from the Cross! He had just been raised on it; the framework of the picture, which we can all imagine for ourselves, was finished. He looks down on the crowd; He so calm, they frenzied, surging, jesting, roaring with laughter, shouting execrations; now one face now another is clear before Him. He is stretched on the Cross looking down, and when after a moment or two of silence He speaks softly, perhaps only a few can hear. How wonderful it is! God is suffering at the hands of His creatures; but not even now is He soured and embittered, nor does He turn away His face from them. His Love and Pity are strong, rising above all despair,

reproach, and cynicism. He turns from man to God, and a new force comes once and for ever into the world, the mystery of Love more strong than death.

What does this word tell us of His Character? It shows His Unselfishness in Cross-bearing. The fact of cross-bearing is familiar to us, we know it is the condition of the Christian life; we are compelled like Simon to bear it, if we cannot like St. Paul glory in it. Some crosses are made for us, and some we have made for ourselves; we are compelled to bear the cross, but are we unselfish and thoughtful of others in bearing it? It is so easy to be fretful, self-absorbed, irritable, careless of the feelings of others and of their comfort. The next time the cross of sorrow, pain, discomfort or irritability presses, let us hear Him saying, "Father, forgive them".

"*Then* said Jesus"—think of His Endurance and Self-control; then and only then He spoke. It is so hard to suffer and be silent—not physical pain, that is comparatively easy, we can set our teeth, clench our hands, and determine to be silent; but to be wronged, misrepresented, caricatured, to be unfairly treated, to see all you love abused, what you care for most insulted; to bear that silently is to be like Christ in the endurance of Cross-bearing.

Think of the interminable hours He had passed through, the journeys of that night, the scourging, the nailing to the Cross; and remember that only then He spoke and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". Yet it was the habit of His Life coming to the rescue, as habits do. During His Life's story the prayer was often on His lips, it was a familiar

utterance, He always had been praying it; now it came to Him in the hour of Death, as our habits will come to us. Thank God He is praying it still; we are confident that the prayer is sounding now. How else dare I speak or you listen, if it is not an eternal utterance?

What does it tell us of His Work? That He fills the office of Absolver. Think of the absolution of the Cross. Vividly before Him He saw sin; yet He did not stand apart, but reached out to help; this seemed the climax of the work of sin, the finishing stroke—all the more need for the prayer. The first-fruit of the Passion is God's Pardon. The source of pardon is in the Fatherhood of God. Christ takes the whole scheme of Redemption up to its source (there were no divided counsels in the Godhead, the Father was not all anger and the Son all love). He had looked to God in His thanksgivings; in the working of His miracles; in the labour of His Ministry; in the utterance of His Prayers—now He looks to Him as the source and spring of His Blood-bought Pardon, "Father, forgive them".

The limits of the absolution are world-wide, the circles of the great Intercession are widening until no one is left out. Was there ever such a large prayer? Intercession is one of the great purposes of this service; let us try to catch the largeness, the wideness, the catholicity of His Intercession, and let ours extend to every one who annoys and irritates us most, who seems most beyond our power to love and bless. There is no limit to Christ's Intercession, and there ought to be none to ours. It was the whole world and all the centuries contained in that "them"; and the ground of the absolution "they know not". Christ does not excuse or

extenuate sin, but with wondrous Love and tenderness He searches for a plea to urge forgiveness. Let us try and catch some of that spirit ; let us search for a spark to fan it into flame, even if we can only find the plea of ignorance.

“Forgive!” While He prays we learn of the power which will apply that Forgiveness. The first drops of Blood were falling, the Sacrifice and Atonement had begun. “The blood of Jesus for our pardon cries,” and in the power of that He prays, “Father, forgive them”. Come and claim your share. There are many gifts we need to pluck from the tree of the Cross ; but above all, common to us all, before everything else—forgiveness. I will go to my Father and say, “Father, forgive me, whether I knew what I was doing or not, Father forgive”.

“Look, Father, look on His anointed face,  
And only look on us as found in Him ; . . .  
For lo ! between our sins and their reward  
We set the Passion of Thy Son our Lord.”

And so absolved I go out to be an absolver ; to try and echo His Prayer for those I find it most difficult to forgive. I need His Power to enable me to do this. Thou hast forgiven me, and, therefore, I forgive.

## II.

### CONSOLATION.

First Pardon and then Penitence—surely we have reversed the order ; it should be penitence first and then pardon ? And yet it is not always so ; the snow on the mountain which has resisted all the blasts of wind melts with the first sunshine ; your child may be stubborn and

impenitent in face of your rebuke, but may soften and melt with a word of love. "Her sins which were many are forgiven, *therefore* she loved much." Penitence often follows pardon. Perhaps you are grieved at not being penitent enough, at not feeling more what you hear about so often; the words of the Passion hymns may seem very unreal to you. Begin at the other end, not with feelings but facts; open your soul to the Absolution of God, to the evidence of your Father's Love, and then will follow the cry of the penitent thief, the first-fruits of the Passion, "Lord, remember me!"

What awakened the prayer? The answer admits you into the secret of the beautiful, the magic Power of Christ. It was just the silent influence of Christ, the felt force of His Character, that wakened the prayer. As far as we know, nothing was said to win the robber. We often say too much or say it at the wrong time; He says nothing, but just reveals Himself, letting loose from the Cross a stream of love, of tenderness and pity, which sweeps the sinner into His Arms. Oh the tremendous influence of quiet love! Mothers, anxious for your boys or your girls, believe in that, try that; it will do what no words can effect, it will illustrate the omnipotence of love, the influence of character.

Our Lord's first Word of endurance, His Pity and His Patience, won't the thief. How many people suffer both at home and outside because we are not better than we are. Holiness is not selfish; it is the greatest power and influence in the world. If we were only what we ought to be, what good might we not do.

“Oh strengthen me that while I stand,  
Firm on the rock and strong in Thee,  
I may stretch forth a loving hand  
To wrestlers with the troubled sea.”

The thief's prayer was almost everything that a prayer ought to be. “We receive the due reward of our deeds”—it is a great point to reach that; far more often we utter Cain's cry, “My punishment is greater than I can bear,” “greater than I deserve”. It showed wondrous self-abasement and wondrous faith, which saw in that scene the King and His kingdom. He only saw a Cross, only heard the jeering cries; but faith worked the transformation, as it can, and instead of the Cross there was a throne, instead of the Crown of Thorns a sparkling diadem, in the pierced Hand a sceptre. The prayer witnessed to the transformation of faith, but it also showed a wondrous audacity. “Remember me,” that is often the last thing we feel disposed to pray. We often pray, “Remember not,” but the dying thief's faith was stronger; he flung himself into the arms of the boundless Mercy of Christ, and was able to say, “Remember!”

Christ's answer revealed another aspect of His Work—first Absolver, now Consoler; it speaks to us of the consolation of the Cross. Think of the effect the prayer had on our Lord; it was the sweetest music He ever listened to on earth, more to Him than the presence of the twelve legions of angels. He was silent before, but He is not silent now, His consolation streams out to meet and answer it. The thief asks for remembrance somewhere, at some time; Christ gives him His Companionship, His Presence, to-day and for ever.



What does His saying mean to us? It gives hope, it rebukes despair; no one who has stood by the Cross, heard that dying man's prayer, marked his sense of sin, and faith and reverence growing under suffering, can ever despair of others or of himself. Who can tell what was passing in the robber's mind, what evil thoughts he may have had, what passionate complaints were on his lips; but a look into Christ's Face, the vision of His Character—and the soul stirs, the conscience is awakened. "Thou hast conquered, oh Galilean!"

"Paradise"—the vision of the life beyond the grave; does not that give consolation to many poor, perplexed, wandering souls? The Intermediate State is a fact; but in spite of all the clear teaching of the Bible on the subject, people often fall back on the idea of Heaven or Hell immediately following death—the verdict before the trial. Does not that leave many problems unsolved? Some of those we have loved and lost were not ripe for Heaven, but neither can we imagine them in Hell. What are they? Where are they? What are they doing?

They are in Paradise. Oh the comfort, rest and salvation of that thought to perplexed mourners! In Paradise! They are training, purifying, growing, casting off some things, learning others, a glorious hope shining before them. They are conscious, fully conscious, with an unclouded consciousness. They are not asleep, in no state of suspended animation, but alive, more alive than you or I are alive, with a fuller, richer, more exuberant life. "Thou," "with Me". Two conscious awakened Personalities. So with our Dead. They are not dead, those whom we have loved and

lost, they are with Him, and if we are in Him, they are with us.

### III.

#### CONSECRATION.

The mystery of sin is not the only mystery ; we live in the presence of at least one but little less difficult. It was before our Lord powerfully and pathetically now. His Mother, the representative of the mystery of suffering, is a spectator of His Suffering ; she cannot help Him, but has to stand by the Cross and see Him die. The picture is reproduced over and over again—sorrow and love helpless in the presence of pain and death.

It was the crowning trial of St. Mary's life ; think of its aggravations. She knew Him to be sinless, she had watched His nature unfolding ; more truly than Pilate she could say, " I find no fault in Him ". She sees Him cruelly and unjustly accused, and He will not help Himself. The rulers of her Church are the murderers of her Child, the crime is committed by those who stand at the altars.

It was the crowning sorrow and the crowning discipline. How wonderful was her life of discipline ; there never was a soul trained like hers. The message of the Annunciation shocking her modesty, arousing her patriotism ; the words of our Lord in the Temple telling of a separate path He had to tread ; the discipline growing and deepening as she only caught glimpses of Him during His Work—and now a trained soul, she is strong enough to stand by His Cross. We so often rebel at suffering and wonder why it is sent, and all the while the soul is being gradually trained, the life gently disci-



plined; and when the supreme trial comes we find out what that discipline has done for us.

What did this Word reveal of our Lord's Character? His Thoughtfulness for others. Is there anything more beautiful and more rare? We sometimes have to cause sorrow to those we love; it argues no want of love to them for us to obey the call of duty and the voice of conscience. Christ could have spared His Mother much of the awful struggle of the Passion. Love to others and to God, duty and home, human love and Divine love, have to be reconciled; He teaches her to give her very best to God; he thinks of her, cares for her, plans for her, provides for her.

As Bishop Creighton said: "Do not weep for the loss of one dear to you, there are others left; restoration of duties re-makes life. In times of sorrow, when one sphere is destroyed, one person, one set of surroundings removed, there are others amongst whom we must live and labour; another sphere . . . let us go simply on our way. Christ restored some duties, He did not say, Find work elsewhere. No; life is to be re-made at home, from that source and centre to go forth."

This Word is the great word of consecration. Everything falls under the shadow of the consecration of the Cross. The Fifth Commandment, all human relationships, ties, obligations to home, Church, parish—let us bring all to be touched, blessed, strengthened, consecrated. He founds a new family, a new and spiritual home; a new sort of kinship is created on Calvary and springs out of the chaos of His Passion. He speaks to the Church of her children, and to each of us of the Church as our mother. The birthplace of the Church

was by the Cross of Christ. Through an agony she was born.

He provides for His own ; through His own He consecrates almsgiving, kindness, benevolence, generosity. St. John took the Mother of the Lord "to his own home," and there, bowed with sorrow and with torn hearts, they laid the foundation of work done for others and done for Christ. Christ draws us to Himself, and as surely to one another ; let us accept this double drawing. Is there any gap that might be bridged over to-day ? Let us take all the earthly part of our life and bring it to Him, praying, "Oh Divine Consecrator, bless me and mine, that I may bless others !"

#### IV.

##### ILLUMINATION.

This is the only Word recorded by the two first Evangelists, and it is wonderful that they should record it. It is so different, so utterly different, from what one would expect ; such a strange cry for His lips to utter Who was so near God ; was it possible for *Christ* to have no vision, no light, no smile upon His Face ? "Why hast thou forsaken Me ?"

Men have travestied the cry, as we might have expected ; they have dared to call it a cry of cowardice, or if not that, of regret. There are only two alternatives with regard to this Word : either it was caused by faint-heartedness, regret and despair, or by the sense of bearing the whole burden of human sin. "Why ?" "He was made sin for us ;" what is the essential feature, element, and consequence of sin, but drifting away

from God? The scapegoat was the parable of the sinner feeling the results of sin, which separates from God. Christ, sinless, accepted the results of sin; He bent under the burden of its consequences; He came close to sorrow, not now to absolve, console, and consecrate, but to illuminate.

What does this Word from the Cross teach us of our Lord's Character? Its sensitiveness—there is hardly anything more beautiful than sensitiveness, like a clear lake reflecting the sky. The darkness struck deep to His Heart; He spared His Mother that by sending her away, but He did not spare Himself. His exquisite sensitiveness, the very charm of His Character, made the depth and awfulness of His Suffering.

What does it teach us of His Work? The illumination of the Cross. We have been led on little by little; sin has been absolved, penitence consoled, home consecrated, and now doubt and darkness are to be illuminated. "There was darkness over all the land," there are times in most lives which correspond to that. Darker than sorrow, worries, trials, darker even than sin, is the sense of being deserted by God; we are silent under the shock, and then as doubt deepens and perplexity grows, we cry like Christ, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

1. We learn from Him that doubt is not sin. "Why?" Who of us has not asked that question of suffering, sorrow, bereavement, unanswered prayers, efforts made in vain? We ask it with a shamed sense that we ought not to do so; but if we ask humbly, reverently, teachably, and will follow the answer, holding fast to His promise, it is not wrong. He asked, Why?

2. We learn also that the facts of Religion do not depend on our consciousness of them. Christ was not forsaken, He was never so close to the Father as then. God was speaking as loudly as before; only the consciousness was wanting, not the Presence itself. "I cannot feel this or that," you say; but Religion is not feeling but fact; God's Love is there independent of your realization of it. Stay by the Cross, in the Church where God has placed you. The triumph of Religion is that of fact over feeling.

"I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou  
Shouldst lead me on.

I loved to choose and see my road, but now  
Lead Thou me on!"

And though He lead me through mists of appalling darkness, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him".

## V.

### REPARATION.

We must not lose sight of the helpful humanity of this word. It was so natural, so exactly what we should have expected. Since the Last Supper, Christ had tasted nothing; think of what He had undergone since then—the journeys to and fro, the trials, the scourging, and the fever of His Wounds. "My throat is dry with waiting for God." He was tasting once again the cup of human pain. Pain had touched Him in infancy, and at different times during His Life on earth; it now made its supreme effort to shake His Faith and make Him untrue to His Father; it wrapped Him round, it strove to master Him. Some of us know what pain is, and be-

cause we know, we pray, "Suffer us not at our last hour for any pains of death to fall from Thee". We are so thankful that Christ recognized it, knew it, did not resent it, rebel against it, or even stoically bow to it, but quietly and naturally acknowledged it.

What does this Word reveal of His Character ?

1. His wonderful Self-restraint and perfect Self-control. It is only now that He allows Himself to speak of pain ; it is the first thing *we* think of in relation to the Cross, but the last with Him. Until now He has spoken of other things and made no mention of His Body ; now He speaks of His own Pain. It is a comfort, when we think of our loved ones suffering under the discipline of pain, to remember that Christ also felt it, owned it, and realized its bitterness. Like us He bowed to it ; but how unlike us He was in His Self-control, dignity, calmness, and refusal to complain. May we not hope to learn from the Passion something to help us to bear pain as He did ?

2. It spoke of the yearning of affection. There are some people to whom life is worth nothing without love ; they are in more danger of falling than others, for they stand, as it were, on the very pinnacle of the Temple ; but are they not also more Christ-like ? He yearned for love ; His cry, "I thirst," was an utterance of love, lamentation, and reproach. It was His last appeal. He beckoned all into His friendship, and attempted to win their love, pity, and sympathy. He still believed in humanity, and did not despair of it, although He knew all the facts about it ; He knew the worst of man, but still believed in the possibility of his recovery. Because of His wonderful hopefulness, He cried, "I thirst".

What does this Word tell of His Work? It is the Reparation of the Passion. It penetrates to every sick-room, to every sufferer, to every child who is told of the Thirst of Jesus, it tells of His longing and yearning for love, but it tells also of reparation; it was part of the great sacrifice offered on the Cross. His hands suffered to atone for the wrongs done by human hands; His head for the evil thoughts and desires of men; His Heart for their sinful lives; His feet for the straying of human feet from the paths of righteousness; His tongue for their lack of self-restraint; and He suffered thirst for their self-indulgence. They indulge themselves, therefore, "I thirst".

Can we do anything to assuage that thirst? They offered Him two draughts; one He drank and one He refused. They offered to drug Him into eternity, but He would not sanction such alleviation of suffering; He preferred to die with thought collected and mind prepared. He refused the mixed draught then, and He will not drink it now. What can I give to Thee? Not a mixed draught. Give more complete self-surrender; give the one thing that has always hitherto been kept back, "the part of the price," He wants that. There is only one way to satisfy His thirst.

"Thou gavest Thyself for me,  
I give myself to Thee."

## VI.

### TRANSFORMATION.

What was finished? His earthly Life under human conditions—for of course Christ submitted to those—

that was all it sounded like to those who stood by. They thought, "He is at the point of death; it is all over with Him"; but we know more, much more, than that. The dreary, sunless three-and-thirty years, which must have seemed centuries to Him, were over; He had obeyed the inner law of sacrifice, "Except it die . . ."; the limits assigned for work on earth were reached; the touch of pain had been added to the Example, that finishing touch which makes all the world kin, for a painless example would have been useless to us. His Life was finished; but what may we learn from this Word, of Himself, His Character, and His Work?

First, His beautiful purposefulness. How sad is a life without purpose! I am afraid we have many illustrations in London of that. There is nothing so grand and noble as with set face to be steadily pressing to the goal. The whole of Christ's Life was spread out before Him; what linked it together? A purpose to hold to, to follow, to persevere in, to look back upon; a plan to be fulfilled, the carrying out of the Will of Another, every detail to be verified not by His choice, but by the Father's guiding.

Let us bring this light to bear on our lives. Is life not "finished," but even begun for us? Have we found our purpose, our goal? It is sad not to finish our work, but worse not to begin it. The question for all of us is: What is our purpose? We are not to drift aimlessly; what is it that holds, lasts, runs through all our life? One reason why we are brought to the Cross is to be taught, not how to *die* but how to live. And this Word tells of the fulfilment of purpose, of what makes the real power and value of life.



Note the Transformation of the Cross—"Finished" yet to all appearance how unfinished it was! There was victory in seeming defeat; what looked like failure was success. One purpose of His Life, as illustrated by His first miracle, was to transform "water into wine," and here He shows us the transformation of failure into success. The last Word brought Him so near to our humanity, now He seems so far away from it; for with us nothing is finished, all has ragged edges. Our life, our character, our home, all are incomplete, and we turn sadly away and say it is all a failure. This Word proclaims the death of failure. We are here to bring our failures, our unfinished characters and achievements, our lives, our efforts for God, our prayers, our devotions, our Sacraments—bring them to be transformed by His touch, Whose cry of pain was drowned in triumph; to ask Him to touch the failures wherever they are seen, and "make these dry bones live".

## VII.

### COMMENDATION.

The first thoughts of life and the last are often the simplest and the same. There is a strange force in the words "Father," "Mother," "Home," and the boy who has drifted away from his mother's influence, his father's control, comes back after a time to the old thought and its power. "Father" was our Lord's first word from the Cross, and after being lost for a while in the mazes of suffering, He comes back in child-like trust to the word again. "Father," since He spoke that last, all the powers of evil have done their worst. He came from God, and He is going back to Him. Let us hold on



to this Word and make it a parable of our life; we shall find everything we need in it, and it will sustain us, as nothing else will, in the hour of dying.

“It is finished,” was our Lord’s farewell to earth, this is His welcome to heaven; he has given His legacy, made His testament, and now He is alone with God. How strange and awful were the accompaniments of this Word, the loud Voice, witnessing to His Divine Life, to the voluntariness of the Sacrifice, the bowing of His head in the dignity of farewell, the triumph of submission drawing all men to the Cross. “Into Thy hands” implies absolutely perfect trust, the ideal of what a death-bed ought to be. Quite calm, collected, undismayed, with all done, nothing to disturb Him now, He turns to God. We learn that in the presence of death He was absolutely trustful. That is all He says—He seems to share our ignorance of what death means, but He places himself in the Hands of His Father, and is calm, trustful, hopeful. The light of the Resurrection was on the Cross, already the dead were beginning to be raised in Jerusalem, when He gave His Spirit as a loan until Easter.

The Commendation of the Cross is the last fruit of the Passion, which you and I are to pluck together to-day. “Oh that I may die the death of the righteous!” Then let us live His life, and when the end comes, and the commendation of the Church is spoken over us, we shall be able to echo Christ’s commendation of Himself to the Father, which we learned by the Cross on Good Friday. “Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, for Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, Thou God of my salvation.”



XXIII.

RELIGION AND COMMON LIFE.



## XXIII.

### RELIGION AND COMMON LIFE.

#### 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

RELIGION and Common Life—that is a large subject; but it is with general principles alone that I am concerned to-day. I start then with this proposition, that they are two things not accidentally but essentially connected. Together they stand or fall. Religion is imperfect, fatally imperfect, if it has no close concern with Common Life, and Common Life is seriously incomplete if it stand apart from Religion. Let me in a few plain words expand the proposition which at first sight may appear highly controversial; and first let us clear the ground by asking one or two very elementary questions.

What is Religion? That is an important question in itself, and obviously important in regard to the subject of which I am trying to speak. What is Religion? Surely it is most important that a rational being should ask that. There is no human language which does not contain traces of such a question and answer; and there never were days when it was asked so much or asked so earnestly. We are constantly hearing of the “irreligion of the day”. I do not believe in it; it is one of those phrases which can be so easily employed without being

in the least examined. It is like the expression : "Crisis in the Church," which has been used as long as I can remember. I have heard of a Clergyman who for forty-six years preached every year on the present grave crisis in the Church—he has gone on and the Church has survived.

No; I do not believe in irreligion—the religious instinct is not so easily disposed of—religious feeling is not like a passing fashion. It may change its form and expression, but it is there; it has no more disappeared than the real man disappears when he changes house or clothes; and the question is as real and as important as ever: What is Religion?

There is only one answer. Religion is the bond between the living man and the Living God—a tie as real, although invisible, as the tie which binds parent and child, or makes a man one with his wife in heart and life. This is the essence of Religion—it has many consequences, many definitions, many incidentals—but in itself Religion is the tie between the living man and the Living God. Various causes tend to separate them; Religion claims to unite them: God in all His Greatness and Power, Fulness of Life, Beauty, Character; and man with his possibilities, capacities, failures, gifts, and powers. That is the claim of Religion, to bring the life of the one into touch with the Life of the Other; to bring the whole man—not a part, but the whole—material, intellectual, spiritual, into touch with the Great Source of all Matter, Mind, and Spirit. That is Religion, nothing less—and if so, then this at any rate is clear:—

(a) That Religion must be Spiritual—a Religion, if it could be imagined, without Spiritual inspiration, and

ideals, and acts, would not be a Religion, it would not be fulfilling one condition, it would not be in touch with God the Great Spirit.

(b) That Religion must be human, in touch with man, in touch at countless points of contact, in touch with his many-sided nature, in touch with life, shaping, influencing all that concerns a living creature, living a human life.

Imagine, if you can, a non-Divine Religion. It fails on the face of it. Imagine, if you can—what the world has seen too often—a non-human Religion. It, as inevitably, fails also. Two systems, two extreme poles of the theological world, contribute to this failure. The most fatal delusion that ever possessed the Christian Church was the delusion that the Will of God could not be done on earth; that the Christian ideal is too high, out of the reach of ordinary men and common life; that only in the artificial life of seclusion from the world, only in the loneliness of the hermit's cell, could the religious ideal be realized. Then came the reaction—Monasticism was swept away with an unsparing hand; the notion that only in the monastery cell could the Will of God be done, was roughly and rudely disposed of; but as mischievous a notion took its place—the sphere and ideal of Religion were transported to another world altogether. Two extremes as usual met, the same delusion was shared by both, that Christianity was something too good for this world. The religious life, said one, was only possible in a cell. Religion, said the other, was only possible in Paradise. The two, between them, accomplished a divorce between Religion and Common Life.

Well; that difficulty is a very old difficulty, and it is not quite solved yet,—indeed I think on any solution, sooner or later the question is inevitably bound to recur. What is the attitude of Christianity towards learning, science, art, amusement, society? Is it always to be hostility, passive or active, to the world? Is Religion perpetually to stand apart from human life; to look coldly upon it, if not actually to frown upon it? Is it always to adopt an attitude of aloofness, almost of suspicion? Is it the duty of Religion to put aside the culture, learning, enterprises, accomplishments, and many-sided interests of life, and just to point to another world; or is Religion to go out to them, to meet them, to bring them into its own atmosphere, into touch with its own spirit?

To these questions two answers have always been given. One is the answer which receives human learning with distrust; sees the taint of evil in the love of beauty and search for truth; views with suspicion or timidity the interests of the world—that, like the Emperor who viewed and despised the treasures of the Vatican, like the Apostle on the house-top ere his eyes were opened to the truth—calls everything but itself “common or unclean”.

Had the Church chosen that answer, had she stood apart like the Baptist, rather than sat down at life's banquets like Christ, her task would have been more easy and less dangerous; but her mission would have been less splendid and less great. She strove to absorb the world, not to despise it; she went forth to meet it, to embrace it. “Christianity,” it has been said, “is not a jewel in a casket, but a seed, a principle of life, in the fruitful ground of human souls.” No doubt evil



sprang up out of the heart of this attitude. At times the Church succumbed to the world, rather than the world was influenced by the Church; but the principle stood out strong and clear—that a Religion apart from Common Life was no Religion, that a divorce between them could only mean the failure of one, and unspeakable loss to the other.

As a matter of fact, what actually happened from the answer that Christianity selected? What is Christian Art—it is not only a name is it?—what is it but the outcome of the marriage of Religion and Life? Under Christian influence, art became the vehicle for expressing a new class of ideas; Christianity supplied themes, subjects, and motives, which the world of art never possessed before. The beauty and humility of the Nativity, the patient suffering of the Cross, the self-sacrifice of the Martyr's life. It is to Religion that art owes her noblest, greatest themes. You will remember, some of you, the passages in Ruskin's "Modern Painters," where he dwells on the expression of Christian feeling in art—the sacred pictures of which he says, "The hues of morning, the sublimity of eve, the gladness that accompanies promise, the sorrow of the sword-pierced heart, are gathered into one lamp of ineffable love". Christian Art—painting, sculpture, architecture, music—immortalizing and expressing the grandest subjects to which Religion claims to witness—to what do we owe it all, but to the courage of Religion, the determination of the Christian Church, at all risks and costs, to do God's Will on earth; not to be "too bright and beautiful for human nature's daily food"?

Such, I submit, are the results of one answer to the

question: "What has Religion to do with Common Life?" But what results from the other answer? What has Monasticism or Puritanism effected by the isolation of Religion from Common Life? Take three subjects only: Politics, Amusement, and Social Problems—not that they appear to have very much in common, but they all illustrate my point as to the results of a policy of isolation.

What is needed in Political life to-day? Is there anything needed which Religion and religious principles are able to supply? Well; a sense of responsibility is one of them. "The conditions of modern life," said Bishop Creighton, "tend to diminish the sense of responsibility. It is assumed that there are forces at work which are Titanic, monstrous, indefinite. Provided a politician does what is popular, it seems immaterial whether he does what is right; and if he is not prepared to carry out the popular will, he has no right to his place in public life at all. Such an argument is equivalent to the abdication of responsibility on the part of him who aims at directing public affairs. But is the plea genuine? Is there really an irresistible current of human opinion, which is beyond human guidance? Is it not the fact that the responsibility remains unaffected; that public opinion is first created and then fostered by politicians, before they use it; that they form it, more than that they are formed by it?" They are great words—never have they more needed to be remembered than now.

A politician is not merely the official of the people, he is the educator of the people. He cannot get rid of his conscience as cheaply as this; he cannot dispose of his

responsibility like this. Plain facts are against him. When not in power, he is attempting to educate public opinion until it puts him into power. He is responsible for the ends chosen, and the means he employs. The realization of responsibility is one of the great and obvious needs of political life. How are you going to impart the sense of responsibility not only in politics but anywhere else?

To abandon a career for conscience sake, to stand firm when not sure of being supported, to hold lightly the applause of men, to substitute principles for a succession of compromises, is not easy, is it? In any department of life, it is not easy. Where is the power to come from? How is a man to get strength to resist the temptation to substitute denunciation for argument, to misrepresent his opponent and snatch a cheap victory, to dispose of the real questions at issue, and pour out clap-trap instead of information? Has any one ever discovered a moral power strong enough for such a purpose as this, except the power Religion affords? Is there any teacher of responsibility like the Christian Church? The more surely we can bring this power to bear on the hands that guide the helm of the ship of State, the better for Religion, and the better for the State. It has not been nearly enough done, or attempted to be done.

It has been well said: "Good men have often tended to be too abstract in their views; to put the general idea of God in the place of all particulars which come under it; to forget that a Religion is nothing which does not create out of itself a new political, a new social, and a new economical order of life, which does not bring

truth and beauty into it as well as piety. It has not always done so; it has impressed the individual, it has consecrated home, it has ennobled work; but it has done little for business, it hardly counts in Society, it is unrecognized in politics, it is non-essential in diplomacy and international relations." If this is true—and who can deny its truth—can we do nothing to promote and spread its influence? for it bodes ill for the future of the country if, in the highest secular department of National Life, Religion is apart from Common Life.

Let me take Amusement as another instance. I think you will agree with me that amusement is one of the great necessary facts of modern life. It is a fact with which we must reckon if we are to deal with human life as we see it and know it. It is a great necessity, a growing necessity, as life becomes more crowded and more complicated. For the lack of it, lives are as bad as we sometimes find them. Drink and dullness are the twin forces that are telling against happiness, and the second is most often the cause of the first. The people to be pitied are not only the people who have no bread, but the people who have no wine, no sparkle, no variety, no fling, no joyousness, no release from dullness. And the necessity has produced the fact. There is no doubt that men work more and play more than they ever did before, that amusement is a greater force in the world than it ever has been. Those who amuse the people are better known to the masses of the people than any other class of men. The man in the street can tell the name of the professional with the highest batting average; I am not sure that he could tell the

name, or is even aware of the existence, of any Member of Parliament, or Bishop, or Parson.

Amusement is a great necessity, a great fact, and I venture to think a great danger also. What ought to be the exception in our lives tends to become the rule. The joy of amusement for the sake of amusement, gives place to a fashion in which no enjoyment is found. What is wanted? I venture to think that is wanted which Religion alone can supply: a sense of responsibility, a sense of proportion, a power of self-restraint, a realization of the sacredness of time, of the needs physical, moral, and spiritual of other people who minister to our enjoyment. These are religious principles—I do not say that Religion has the monopoly of them; but they are essential to it, included in it, emphasized by it. It is not in the interests of Amusement, it is not in the interests of Religion, that the two should stand apart, the one suspicious of the other, the one frowning on the other; but that the two, hand in hand, should illustrate the marriage of Religion and Common Life.

Let us take Social Problems as a third illustration of the importance of this union. What is it that is keeping whole masses of the people out of touch with Religion to-day? Why is it that thousands of working men hold aloof, and will have nothing to say to it? Is it because they are living bad lives, and Religion would interfere with them? I do not believe that in the case of many of them that is the reason at all. They are living good lives, lives which put many professing Christians to shame. Why is it, then, that they stand aloof from Christianity, and are out of touch with all

religious life and Worship? I answer, because they have come to think, quite deliberately, that Religion lies apart from Common Life. The question that is the test question with them is this: Will this movement do good here and now? Will it help matters; will it remedy ills—not in some dim future and distant place, but here in this world, thick with problems full of difficulty? What is its working value now?

You cannot wonder that this question should be asked. You may condemn socialism, and quarrel with socialistic theories and methods; but these men are face to face with the problems. We read of them in the newspapers, we listen to speeches about them; they see them, they are face to face with them, they are lying at their doors. Miserable homes, sweated wages, half-starved children, drink and dullness—all are before them. If the only Religion we can offer them is a Religion for the next world and not this; if all we can say is that there will be a swing of the pendulum somewhere, some day, a tremendous reaction and reversal; that will not satisfy their sense of grievance or appeal to their sense of justice. The one condition of Religion as a power amongst thoughtful men of the working classes, is the union of Religion with Common Life. The one determining test of the claim of the Christian Church upon them is: What is its contribution, does it make any contribution to the problem of life and labour?

Then a difficulty arises. "You speak of Religion and Common Life," some say; "that is all very well; but Religion as you interpret and understand it is out of tune altogether with Common Life. Common Life

is a free thing, it has no trammels, no fetters upon its thought and action; each man is responsible in himself and to himself for what he is and how he lives and works. But your Religion is a thing of Creeds and formularies; it means that thought is fettered and opinion in chains. What union can there be between them? The one stands for freedom, the other for bondage."

"For modes of faith let zealous bigots fight,  
His must be true whose life is in the right."

But is it so? Is Common Life the creedless thing it is said to be? Is the profession of the artist, the musician, the business man the creedless thing that makes it, of necessity, apart from Religion? I venture to think that there is no calling in the world that has not a creed, that there is no profession that has not its articles of belief. Not one of us will go about his work tomorrow without accepting and acting upon, every moment, a whole system of principles and beliefs as difficult, as mysterious, as the Creed of the Christian Church. We have not analysed or tested them, we do not go back on them to prove their truth—it would be impossible and absurd—we accept them on the traditions and experiences of others. The objection, I submit, may be turned into an argument. In the definiteness of dogmatic principles and articles of Faith, Common Life is in complete harmony with Religion. The sphere of dogma is as wide as the world.

My last point is this: Religion apart from Common Life would be at once without its main feature and purpose. What is the main feature of Religion? I venture to say, not exclusiveness but inclusiveness. There was



a time in the childhood of Religion when exclusiveness was the badge of Religion; when it had no bigness, no breadth, no positiveness. Prohibition and restriction were its watchwords; "Thou shalt not" was its highest utterance, and the result was a strong type of character, but an inevitable reaction. Christ reversed this. Inclusiveness took the place of exclusiveness. The gates were flung open. "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." The barriers of race were broken down, the army of the Cross passed out of the open gates of the City of God, and took possession of all human life. So exclusiveness is dead. "To all men, everywhere," that is the message of Religion—yes, and to all things too. The Church is no longer a spiritual aristocracy, a limited company of select people. The Clergy are not a separate caste, apart from and outside the lives of others. The strength of the married priesthood of the Church of England is that it is so interwoven with human relationships as to be able to enter into the very lives of the people. Religion is like the Cross, its Central Object—nothing is too high for it, nothing too low, nothing beyond the reach of its outstretched arms.

What is the goal of Religion? Is it not to bring life in its completeness, and lay it down before God? In the last book of the Bible, that beautiful vision too often mistakenly limited to the other world, the crowned beings bring their crowns and cast them down before Him. That may be the picture of the future, all life, all the powers of life, all human activities, all human efforts, coming in their completeness—for a crown is the symbol of completeness—and surrendering to



God. But it should be the picture of to-day, here and now. It is the goal at which Religion is aiming: the consecration of life in its completeness and all its varieties; the merging of what we call the secular into the Religious. That is the ideal after which Religion and Life should strive; it is the consummation of the union of Religion and Common Life.

## 2. HOME LIFE.

*(An Address delivered at the Mothers' Union Central Conference, 9 May, 1901.)*

I AM asked to speak to you to-day on the subject of the Maintenance of a High Standard, and although no definition was given me of the particular sphere in which the standard was to be maintained; yet looking at the occasion and the fact that we meet under the auspices of the Mothers' Union, it is not difficult to understand that it is meant to apply not to the nation or the Church, but to the home, where the streams rise which go to form the wider ocean of national or ecclesiastical life. I propose, therefore, first to consider how we can promote and maintain a high standard in home life as a whole, and then how we can do so in those different departments of which home consists.

1. The maintenance of a high standard in home life rests primarily on the basis and conviction that the foundations of home, like the foundations of the Church, are upon the "holy hills". That it is a *Divine institution*, not the outcome of human experience, or one means of satisfying the social instinct, or from the development of human circumstances, but that the home

though human, exquisitely human, is in its origin fundamentally and essentially Divine.

Is it not so? What is the origin of home? It received its credentials, it was appointed, in Eden; its installation was the crowning act of creation; its antiquity is surpassed by that of no other institution. It is older than the Bible, older than the Church, old as the morning of the world's creation. Try as the world may, it cannot eradicate or subdue it. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," there are few institutions which do not fall under cover of those words; home is the one exception, it never withers, never fades. Why does home live for ever? Because it has an immortal element in it, because it is a Divine institution.

Do we doubt it because home life is so often commonplace, vulgar, selfish, cold, narrow, ill-tempered, sour? Do we doubt it because of the revelations of the divorce and police courts, with their brutality and degradation? Do we ask, if God made home sacred, why it is not kept sacred? The answer is the old answer: God will not destroy the discipline of home, He will not limit the human will, He will not make men good by their ceasing to be free. . . . A high standard of home life rests then primarily on the fact that home is not only human but Divine, that it is an ordinance of God.

Next to that conviction as to the basis on which home life rests, must come the conviction as to the purposes it is intended to serve, if a high standard of home life is to be promoted and maintained. You cannot have a high standard if you have not clear convictions as to what its purpose is.

The maintenance of a high standard is at first nega-

tive and destructive ; we must kill the notion that home is, like Parliament or trade or any profession, an ordinary institution, a human institution, for the supply of human needs, and the development of the ordinary human life. We must get rid of the idea that home is only a dormitory or a restaurant, the sole object being to use and be in it as little as possible ; and we shall only get rid of this notion by realizing the basis on which home rests, the purposes it is meant to serve, and the tremendous importance of its atmosphere.

What are the purposes and uses of home ? How can we utilize, elevate and maintain it ? In what different channels does home life flow ?

Home means the discipline of duties, training in commonplaces of life. By the discipline of duties, I do not mean what all agree upon as the basis of home : the two pillars of personal responsibility and personal service ; that the idea of duty runs through home life ; but I use the word in the plural : "Duties". Home life involves common-sense in dealing with its manifold claims ; and that of itself is of enormous moral and spiritual value.

To adjust the varied and conflicting claims of duty, is not that the difficulty of life ? It was the problem propounded to our Lord, it is the problem of home ; the higher the level, the more intense and manifold the problem. "God and Cæsar"—not only to which and when ; but how much and how often, are we to give to each ? In every department the problem presses ; it takes different forms in State, in Church, in personal life ; but home is the battle-field where the conflict is fiercest. The network of relationships which make up

home, the little circles which just touch each other in home life—myself, society, work, amusement, Religion—how can I reconcile and adjust their claims, how give to all their rights?

This is the task of a home, a perpetual conflict—all discipline implies conflict—it makes home a Gethsemane; but it makes the greatness and dignity of home, because it means the discipline out of which the trained life reaches the point whence it can look fairly and proportionately at other claims. How is this to be done?

Home means the discipline of circumstances. We know how tremendously powerful and varied is the force of environment, the force of circumstances. We tend to exaggerate its power, to forget that we are not slaves to it, that our task in life is to conquer circumstances; and the secret of true moral greatness lies in that. It is a truism to say that the real task of a man is to conquer his circumstances, and not allow his circumstances to conquer him.

There are two scapegoats on which people are fond of casting their responsibility—the one heredity, the other environment. You constantly hear it said: "I have got it in my blood, I cannot help myself"; and this is sometimes terribly, pathetically true; or: "I am the slave of circumstances, things are too strong for me, a high standard is impossible, because I am what I am, because of the place where I live, or the set in which I move". All the heroic in us rises in rebellion; we are *not* the slaves of circumstances, we are here to conquer them. *I am* able to resist the taint in my blood; it is not impossible. *I am* able to rise above the circum-

stances of my home, the difficulties in Religion, the tediousness of duties; it is not impossible. Ah, believe me, that a high standard of home life can at least be kept in view, when we realize that circumstances—sorrows, joys, losses, gains, gloom, sunshine, poverty or wealth—all are there to give the opportunities for service, instruction, training, character. There are chances on the battle-field of home of winning a Victoria Cross as glorious as that to be won on any battle-field.

For, after all, home means the discipline of character. A high standard in home life becomes a glorious reality when we realize that it does mean that. Character is the great achievement of human life; we must never forget that the text of our Lord's first Sermon was the blessedness not of doing but of being; not of action so much as of character. It would be well if we took the outlines of character as sketched by Him, into the strong light of our home life. Gentleness, meekness, single-heartedness, peace-making—how do they look viewed in so penetrating a light?

Is there any school of character like the home? Is there any department of human life where a high ideal is so easily lost, so difficult to reach? "I am at my worst at home," "I am quite different with my own people, you would hardly know me". What a confession of failure! That tremendous thing *character*, the one thing that lasts, which we can carry with us when we die, is forming and crystallizing under the influences of home. If we only realized that! If remembering it we set ourselves to help to smooth the rough places, to make the crooked straight, we should

realize the tremendous meaning of a high standard in home life.

2. Forgive me if I go on to indicate in what departments of home life a high standard is specially needed. They may suggest discussion, though they are so simple and commonplace.

The conversation of the home—is there no room for a high standard there? Nothing to be done negatively and destructively? Nothing to prevent the dissection of the character of others, the sweeping construction put on their actions, the hasty imputation of motives? Nothing to stop the foolish gossip—and that worse form of gossip nowadays among good people: Parochial gossip, ecclesiastical tittle-tattle, discussion of the Clergy, which sometimes takes the form of gushing admiration (almost the worst, since unfair criticism may at least be healthy in its effect), which has done so much to lower Religion in the eyes of our young people? Can we do nothing positively to take conversation out of the shallows? Not to make it strained or unnatural, up in the clouds, above the level of the youngest member of the family; but to give it a wider sweep, larger limits, a more intelligent colouring; to quietly, unspokenly, impress the tremendous sacredness of speech? We should welcome any effort to raise the conversation of the home, if we really value home.

A high standard of amusement—how can we raise that? Not by depreciation of amusement, an affectation of superiority or cold indifference to it. No! By acknowledging amusement to be a great necessity, influence, duty; but by insisting on its corresponding to its own name. The law of variety is the law of human

life ; the principle of change is God's principle of health, happiness and beauty. Amusement by its very name must be the exception and not the rule. By protesting against the degradation of amusement ; by which I mean insisting that amusement shall amuse. By claiming that it should be generous, free, proportionate, unselfish, safe. By recalling the uses amusement is meant to serve—it will discipline character, as little else can do so effectually. For amusements not only test us, they make us ; it is not we who make amusements, they make us. By asking for discrimination as to times, pursuits, books, plays—above all, by denouncing in the name of God, fearlessly and frankly, in the sphere of home, *any* amusement which robs God of His rights, others of their rest, or the soul of its highest privileges, we shall be the true champions of home life.

Broad views are the fashion nowadays about Sunday and amusements, and about the two together ; but no breadth of view should allow us to forget that there are limits no one dare try to pass. A high standard means the recognition of limits, and the limits of amusement are : the Worship of God, consideration for our fellows, and the deep needs of our own soul.

Last of all, a high standard in Religion—is there no room for that ? The religious instruction given to children of the so-called upper classes is usually infinitely inferior to that of the poor. The astounding ignorance of the young English girl on the subject is only equalled by that of the public school boy. What can we do to maintain a high standard in Religion ?

It must be an intelligent standard. We must encourage the use of the understanding in order to be less



shallow, less narrow, more intelligent. It must be a simple standard, dealing with facts and influences, not wasting time in arguing over unimportant matters. It must be a practical standard, applied to the details of ordinary life. It is astonishing how people with all their training, try to divide Creed and conduct, the Doctrine of Christ from moral practice. It must be the *Christ* standard, nothing lower, nothing less. The only way to raise a high standard in home or elsewhere is to raise it in the Name of Christ, by the exhibition of the Character of Christ, by living the Christ life, and walking humbly in His footsteps.

### 3. IRRITABILITY.

(*St. Peter's, Cranley Gardens.*)

“Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”—St. Matthew XI. 29.

THERE is nothing more plausible and nothing more misleading than conventional standards of evil. It is true of nearly all of us that we

“Compound for sins we are inclined to  
By damning those we have no mind to.”

Great breaches of the moral law startle and repel, and bring down their own condemnation; but grave faults in human character often pass unnoticed, although they are the specks which hide the sun, the rifts in the lute which mar the music of the Christian life, the blemishes on the purity of the lily, the poison which creeps into and corrupts the limpid stream of human joy which means so much to us. These may appear to count for little, and yet they tell of a fatal taint. They



are the microbes—the forerunners of a disease which eats away the spiritual life. You remember how it is written: “Naaman . . . was a great man . . . and honourable . . . a mighty man in valour, *but* he was a leper.” You remember how it is told us of one enthusiast that he cried, “Lord, I will follow Thee, *but* . . .” Most of us are Naamans in our characters; in every one there is a “but”. It is the work of Religion to discover it and bring it into the light, and with the help of God to get rid of it.

It is of one of these “buts” that I want to speak to-day, of one of the commonest blemishes on the life and character of the Christian. You may think it counts for little, but it hides the sunlight, spoils the harmony of life, taints the stream of joy and happiness which should be flowing full and sweet through the difficult places of life—I mean ill-temper or *irritability*. Let us consider (a) its causes, (b) the forms it takes, and (c) the remedies by which it may be met.

(a) First among the causes of irritability I would place the pressure of life. No one, I imagine, can have failed to notice how much more irritable and ill-tempered the world is than it used to be. Nay, more than that, most people are bound in honesty to say of themselves, “How much more irritable I am than I used to be; there was a time when hardly anything put me out; morally I could ‘grin and bear it,’ shrug my shoulders and let things slide, but now I am so quickly put out, so easily disturbed, by what I would have laughed at once.” Shall I be wronging London if I say, that to some people it seems as if this weed flourished more here than in other places, as though London

life and conditions were a hot-house for promoting this unhealthy growth? The reason is not far to seek. Life runs too fast, the pace is too great. As the river seems to quicken its speed as it nears the sea, so the world may be nearer its goal, life may be running fast because it is running its last lap. Be this as it may this at any rate is certain, there never was an age when life was so hurried, so crowded, so strenuous, so anxious, when there was so much to do and so little time in which to do it, when there was so much haste, and jostling, and breathlessness.

The result is inevitable; it is evident in our national character; we are losing our boasted English calmness, the quiet stolidity which used to characterize us is rapidly disappearing; we are becoming excitable and hysterical, apt to be carried off our feet by the last sensation of the day, the last newspaper report, the last exciting scandal; and so we are growing less even-tempered than we used to be. How can it be otherwise? Even a machine will break down under over-pressure, and human nature is not a machine but a delicate piece of organism with body, mind, nerves, and emotions, not always evenly balanced; and when we call upon a system so complex and delicate to do work it was never meant to do, we must pay the penalty. It breaks down.

That is the first cause of ill-temper—we live in a rush of over-pressure. “Ah, but,” you say, “how can we help it? Circumstances are too strong for us, the conditions of life too hard and severe; every one rushes, we must rush too.” Must we? Must we, even at the cost of character, crowd into the day more than it can hold,

because we lack the courage to say, "No"? Is not our Religion meant to make us more restful? "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile! For there were many coming and going." Our Lord knew the danger of over-pressure; He withdrew Himself from the crowd. The best work in the world is done by those who pause and hear the Voice saying, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

Another cause is over-sensitiveness. Certainly sensitiveness is a beautiful thing. To be sensitive is to be like the sea reflecting so clearly every passing cloud, every laughing ray of sunshine, every soft ray of moonlight which traces a silver path across it. To be sensitive is to be alive quickly and responsively to the sorrows and joys of others; it is to be like the Saviour, rejoicing at the banquet and weeping at the tomb. God save us from those who pride themselves on not being impressionable! Of course they avoid many moral risks; but they do it at the price of influence, at the cost of all that makes it a delightful and happy thing to live. But exaggerated sensitiveness is a different matter; it is neither good for oneself nor other people. When it means a nature always on wires, a character with so many tender spots that one is afraid to touch it anywhere, a perpetual defensive attitude, a quick perception of imaginary slights—then, indeed, sensitiveness instead of being a beautiful plant, becomes a noxious weed spreading poison, the root of that irritability which more than anything else wrecks human life and character.

A third cause is over-anxiety—there are hardly any words of our Lord so fitted to the needs of the present

day as those which in our authorized version read, "Take no thought . . ." but which should be translated, "Be not anxious". It sounds at first as if He were depreciating prudence, that faculty on which Religion is built; but He is really pointing out the peril of anxiety, and the words which follow, the beautiful analogy from nature, showing the uselessness of worry, the trust which comes from the belief in the Fatherhood of God, are but enforcing the wrong, danger, and folly of anxiety. Was the warning ever more needed than now? You have only to glance at the faces you see in the street, those of the business people with whom you are acquainted, to notice the look of worry traced upon them, that joylessness which is becoming a feature of the age, and which results so often in that last awful act of crime, that moral cowardice, that defiance of God, the one irreparable wrong, which we call suicide. All this tells us how much the words of Christ are needed, "Be not anxious!" Over-anxiety results in the embittering of human character. "How irritable so and so is," you say, but you do not know his conditions and circumstances, the little worries which are fretting his life away and ruining his character.

Then there is over-impatience—I ask you to note the word "Over," for there is an impatience which is right. To tell us never to be indignant, never to rebel against the unbearable, to know no Divine discontent, to take everything as it comes, to sit passively with folded hands—there is no talk which makes us so impatient, because it is so unreal. That is not the Patience of God. With tyranny, injustice, oppression, disloyalty, treachery, betrayal of trust, unrequited kindness, violated confidence,

wronged affection, we have no right to be patient. There is a Divine discontent of which the world wants more. Consider, for instance, the hideous self-complacency of prosperous people, ignorant of the lives and conditions of those who make their clothes for sweated wages, and toil on into the night for a few pence so that a fashionable tradesman may complete his orders. May God awaken the conscience of well-to-do people and make them ashamed of a patience such as this! But on the other hand, remember that "He that believeth shall not make haste". God is never in a hurry, the beauty of His Work is that He moves so slowly. Remember that Jesus Christ was never impatient; He waited thirty years to begin His Work, He bore so patiently with the blindness of His Disciples, He never hurried a single soul or was in haste Himself. We must learn to look on life as a school of patience. What a new light that sheds on the little things that annoy and fret us, the people who are late for their engagements, the children who seem to have a passion for destruction! What a school of patience life may be! There is nothing more beautiful than to see a naturally impatient man who has learned slowly and with difficulty, often in agony with set teeth and clenched hands, that "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city," coming out at last with the marks on his character which tell of conquered ill-temper. That is to know something of the Patience of God.

Behind all the other causes of irritability is one great cause—*Self*. That is at the root of every evil; it ruins happiness, degrades love, sours character, and spoils work. If I will put myself first, make my whole life

revolve on that pivot; if my motto is not the increase of others and the decrease of self; if the comfort of others, the pleasure of others, the good of others, is not first but last in my life; if I am thinking of myself, planning for myself, never even in worship losing sight of myself—then of course ill-temper follows. In prayer, worship, love, and work, it is true that to lose myself is to find myself and save my character.

(b) Among the places where the ravages of ill-temper may be traced, home is the corner of life's vineyard where it flourishes most easily. "Home, sweet home"—what an irony it often is! How many homes are anything but sweet! There we fling off the mask we are obliged to wear outside, there we are most naturally ourselves, we shake off restraint, there we are so well known at our best and at our worst; and for that reason, home does not always see us at our best. Outside it we may be most charming and agreeable; inside it what a transformation often takes place! There is one department of home life, that of the housekeeper, which is particularly affected by irritability in its ordinary routine and cares. Amongst the pictures our Saviour drew for us, is that of the worried housekeeper. She often suffers from ingratitude, non-appreciation, an entire forgetfulness of all that such an office must involve. A man comes home after his work, airs his grievances, talks of his own concerns, tells of his losses and gains, and knows nothing of that long series of worries which so often makes up a woman's day, and for which she has very little to show. "Killed by worry" might be the epitaph of many a shadowed life and soured character

caused by the lack of that appreciation and sympathy silently and pathetically demanded.

(c) What are the remedies for irritability? First a healthy body. "Ah," you say, "that is beyond my own control; if ill-temper comes from physical causes, then I am not responsible!" Pardon me, are you quite sure of that? One sometimes hears it said, "He has a bad temper; but then, poor fellow, it is his health"—as if that exhausts responsibility. It does not. The laws that affect our physical health go far deeper and beyond that. What makes the new revelation of the power of spiritual healing (I do not mean Christian Science, that is quite another matter) so valuable, is that it is the recognition of the fact that the whole of man's nature is Divine, and that the methods of restoration to health touch character very closely. If I break and defy laws of health, and neglect the simplest principles; if irritability and depression follow, if I am a patch of gloom on my home, instead of being the ray of sunshine which it is everybody's duty to be in this grey world, then I am responsible. In the Name of the Saviour of the body, I do not hesitate to say that the first cure for ill-temper is to take pains to have a healthy body.

Then quiet solitude—never was there more danger of forgetting the simple necessity of being alone. Some people have a horror of solitude, they say it is impossible, that they cannot be alone. Well, a nature can sink to a point at which, having always lived in crowds, it does find it impossible. Christ, the busy, hard-worked Christ, with crowds always waiting to see Him, insisted on being sometimes alone; He knew the importance of



the calmness which came from those solitary moments. "Enter into thy chamber and shut thy door," is not only a condition of Religion but of character; those who follow that rule are stronger, brighter, cheerier, less irritable, and more able to do what all of us ought to try to do—make their little corner of the world a happy place.

Last of all, there is *the vision of Christ*. "Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly"—there is no remedy for irritability like that. He had so much to disturb Him, so much work to do, so many people to carry on His Heart, so much stupidity to put up with, so much disappointment to face, such interruption of His plans, pain, sorrow, anxiety about those He loved and cared for, grief at the awful spectacle of sin, and yet He was Meek and Lowly. Look at Him, remember that the power of His Life consisted not only or chiefly in what He did, but in what He was. He is our Model, we do not study Him enough. He is the Bearer of sin, but He is the Teacher of character.

"I lay my sins on Jesus,  
The spotless Lamb of God ;"

we need to say it, we love to say it, but we cannot stop there, we must go on :—

"I long to be like Jesus,  
Meek, lowly, gentle, mild. . . ."

And He answers, "Do you really? Is it more than the sentiment and rhetoric of a hymn? Then learn of Me, for I am meek, lowly, and gentle, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,"



## 4. ILLNESS.

I want to speak to you to-day of the discipline of illness, of the people who, like the Centurion's servant, lie "at home sick"; I do not mean suffering under thrilling and tragic conditions, but the suffering without any romance about it, which may and does come to us all. It is a familiar fact. We have borne the burden ourselves or helped others to bear it; we have seen the deterioration or improvement of character resulting from it. I want to speak of illness, its aggravations, its compensations, its uses, its purposes; I want to speak of the strange power you and I possess of utilizing or wasting it; of what it is that we can set, if we will, against the discipline of illness and pain; of what enables a man to look back on the illnesses of his life as the recruiting forces of his life, the refreshing streams under which his character has ripened; of what will make it possible for you and me, in the retrospect of Eternity, to say: "It was good for me that I was afflicted"; I should have been poorer morally and spiritually if I had never been "at home sick".

What are the aggravations of illness? What makes it so hard to bear?

I think the first is the consciousness of its origin, that so much of it is self-made. The first thing that needs to be said about illness is: "Avoid it, and prevent it if you can!" Illness is not normal but abnormal; health is God's rule for us, and it is not by any means necessary or inevitable that we should be ill. Christian Science with all its defects is witnessing to that. There is a wonderful discipline in bearing illness

when it comes ; but it seems to me that there is a still greater discipline in avoiding it.

An enormous amount of illness is home-made. When people break the laws of Nature ; violate the conditions of health ; sow the seeds of disease by intemperance or the injudicious use of drugs ; ignore rules as to diet, dress, rest, and exercise ; turn night into day ; make a toil of amusement ; not so much overwork—for few really overwork—but worry about their work ; live in a continual rush, and refuse to listen to the voices of experience ; then their illness is not normal but abnormal, it is due not to God but to themselves. It is absurd for such people to pose as martyrs and talk about their “Cross” and the “Hand of Providence,” when the illness is really a cross of their own making, and the real hand that brings it is their own carelessness, obstinacy, stupidity, or short-sightedness.

I do not, of course, wish to encourage any one to become a valetudinarian, to join the ranks of those who go about in constant dread of infection, haunted by the terror of microbes, absorbed in their own ailments to the exclusion of those of others ; but how many utterly fail to realize the sacredness of health, and so throw away one of God’s best gifts. It is a terrible thing to throw ourselves from the “pinnacle of the Temple,” where God has placed us by endowing us with a vigorous constitution and a healthy body.

The second aggravation of illness is its mystery ; it seems so incomprehensible, so purposeless. It would be so much easier to bear if we could see through it and grasp its meaning. It is ubiquitous, impartial, it spares no one, and yet we know so little about

it. We can only speculate and theorize, and invent solutions of the problem. The Apostles of our Lord thought that pain necessarily meant punishment, and sickness implied sin. "Who did sin, this man or his parents?" Job's friends suggested to him as he was sitting in his misery, lonely, suffering, his heart torn with grief, that his special suffering implied special sin, until he turned upon them and shattered their wretched theories. We may take that line in national disasters, or the troubles that afflict us or our friends, we may improve the occasion with well-worn platitudes; but sooner or later we find that it does not square with the facts. Too often it is the righteous who suffer and the ungodly who escape. It was part of the problem that baffled the Psalmist—that he found too hard for him. Job knew that his suffering was not the result of his sin; he rebelled, as we do, at the idea, and went on asking: "Why?" The darkest part of the discipline of illness is often the failure to understand it.

Do you remember how God revealed the reason to Job? He did not answer his question, but He wrapped Him round with the assurance of His Pity and Love. He swept away the theory that suffering means sin; He substituted for it the fact that it means God. While we are dimly conscious that illness develops that part of the nature which might otherwise have remained undeveloped, that character conquers through suffering, Christ Himself proclaimed the fact that illness is a background—a platform on which to manifest the works of God. "That the works of God should be made manifest in him." Like the lightning flashing against the background of the darkened sky, the Good-

ness of God, the loving-kindness of man, shine forth in sickness and in suffering.

Next there is the aggravation of anticipation, the torment of fear, the various forms of dread which haunt us in proportion to our temperament, our circumstances, and our experience of illness. Some people dread pain more than others; not because they are more cowardly, but because they are peculiarly sensitive to it—a reputation for courage is sometimes based upon the lack of sensitiveness—and they fear their character may deteriorate under the strain. Some dread the forced inactivity which may be no trial to others; and some are more alive to the deeper hidden possibilities of illness. There is something solemn about the time when we realize that we are “going to be ill”; when we make up our accounts, arrange our possessions, write a few letters, put away our work, and say to ourselves: “I am on the brink of the unknown, I am going to be ill”.

The helplessness of illness makes it particularly trying to the independent, self-reliant, strong-willed people, who are accustomed to look after others, who keep the home machinery going, whom every one consults. To them uselessness, helplessness, and the sense of dependence is new and repugnant; it embitters their illness and sometimes even sours their character, accounting for irritability, impatience, depression. Is not this, however, the very teaching such natures require? Some of us have realized it for ourselves. We have been led apart from the multitude, stripped of our influence, shown our unimportance, that we are not in the least indispensable, taught by illness that

the world, even the little world of home, could get on very well without us. Through helplessness we have had to learn that our "strength is to sit still".

The incidental burdens of illness are often the heaviest. Pain, weariness, sleepless nights, interminable days are hard to bear; but harder still to most of us is the trial of depression. The breadwinner wonders whether his work will still be open to him when his illness is over, the mother asks herself anxiously how her children are being cared for, the clerk is troubled about his ledgers, the lawyer thinks of his neglected clients, the physician of his patients who never reckon upon the doctor being ill, the Priest of his Services and his sick. Yes; the great trial illness brings is the trial of depression. But we must remember that this trial has always existed, and is much more due to physical than spiritual causes. The strongest souls have suffered from depression. It was Elijah—so fearless on Carmel, so active in running before the chariot of the king—who lying on his face under the juniper tree, prayed that his life might be taken away. It was the Baptist—who had made the rocks of the desert ring with the summons to repentance—who when pining for air and sunshine in his prison cell felt his faith failing. It was Christ, when worn by suffering and loss of Blood, Who wailed out the bitterest cry the world has ever heard.

Body, mind, and spirit are so wonderfully linked, they act and react upon each other. Mercifully, however, "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are but dust". The thought of this text might sometimes make us less depressed, less fretful, less

impatient, less difficult to nurse. The Lord may have hidden Himself behind a thick passing cloud; but we must just trust Him, hold on to Him in the darkness, and hear Him say: "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Hand". Then we may be able to turn on ourself and say: "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him which is the health of my countenance and my God."

What are the compensations of illness? What may we hope for? What have we perhaps found when we were "at home sick"?

First there is the discipline of character; there can hardly be a greater test, or a severer discipline, than illness. Of how few of us can it be said that our Doctors and Nurses see us at our best; when we are ill we are off our guard, the mask of conventionality is dropped, the artificiality gone. If you really want to know the stuff of which a man is made, notice the books he reads, the letters he writes, the amusements he enjoys, the friends he chooses, but particularly notice what he is when illness comes to him. "The furnace is for gold." Illness is at once the test and the revealer of character.

There is the discipline of submission—and by submission is meant much more than a helpless acquiescence in an enforced necessity; it is not negative but positive, it is the will rising above the circumstances, the character emerging victorious out of them. It is a very severe strain to lie still without grumbling; to do what one is told; to bear pain quietly, bravely, hopefully; to be content to leave our work undone; and to refuse to be miserable, lest we make others miserable.

There is the discipline of silence—a lesson particularly needed by some. The life of a great talker is like a shallow stream, constantly trickling on with no depth, no quiet pools. When we are ill the stream is checked, we have time to think, time to read, time to speak to God and to listen to His Voice. “I kept silence.” It is sometimes the first time that it can truthfully be said; and when it is said, it has about it the faint echo of the words: “He was oppressed, He was afflicted, yet He opened not His Mouth”.

There is the discipline of selflessness, for there is nothing which tests unselfishness like illness. I do not think any man except Archbishop Leighton ever wished to be ill in an inn; if we are to be ill, we want to be ill at home, we dread being ill abroad or in other people's houses; but illness at home has its special perils. We take the nursing of our own family as a matter of course, and are apt to forget the trouble and fatigue we are causing; it is so easy to ignore the comfort of those who minister to us, their need of rest, exercise, amusement. There is always the risk of deterioration when we grow selfish through our suffering, and there is nothing sadder than to see a sweet, bright, unselfish, thoughtful nature soured by illness and rebelling against the discipline of unselfishness.

One of the great compensations of illness is that it may be, so often is, the school of sympathy—that great gift of entering into the lives of others, and sharing their sorrows and sufferings, can only come like that. The power to sympathize is nearly always gained in sickness and suffering, it is born of pain. There is a bond between those who suffer and those who have suffered.



Can you not almost tell by the tone of the voice, and the sound of the footstep of some one who comes to visit you in your suffering, if he has ever been ill himself? The Priests of old were sprinkled with water on head, hands, and feet, and so set apart for their work; and we must be sprinkled with suffering in order to become priests of sympathy. This helps us to understand the illnesses of children. It illustrates the law of vicarious suffering, it has results for those who love the children; and it may be an unconscious training for themselves, fitting them to be priests of sympathy in later life.

One word about chronic invalids. There is no romance about chronic illness, it seems sometimes as if it could only be a dreary, monotonous waiting for the end; but we know that some of the best workers in life have been invalids. We remember rooms that were the brightest spot in the house, and the place where every one took their joys, their troubles, and their failures, to find a listening ear, wise counsel, and a loving heart.

Yes; there are compensations. We are inclined to murmur at illness, to charge it to God's account, to ask why it is sent; and all the time it is a mine of wealth. We all feel the darkness, the cold, and the damp as we go down into it; but we come up again bearing the priceless jewel of the Compassion of Christ Himself. That is a great compensation; but the crowning one lies in the words of Jesus: "I will come and heal him"; for it means the Knowledge of Christ, the Presence of Christ, the close Personal Sympathy of Christ. Sometimes it is almost literally true. When medical skill and nursing have done their utmost and stand aside, an unseen power steps in; Christ says: "I



will come," and in the silence He does His Work. There is a strange recovery ; there is a spiritual process ; there is a deepening peace. The illness leads us to deeper seriousness, wider sympathy, greater remembrance of God, closer, more real companionship with Christ.

Finally, one word as to convalescence. That has its joys ; but it is also a very trying time for ourselves and others ; it is so easy to be selfish in our convalescence, that we need to watch ourselves most carefully. Why is it that thank-offerings for recovery from illness are so rare ? So few people "set up a pillar". "Were there not ten cleansed, where are the nine?" That question should sound through the days and perhaps weeks of slow recovery. Then it may be that there will be streams in the desert of a character that needed the discipline of illness, and amongst the happiest memories of later years will be the time when we were "at home sick".

### 5. LETTER-WRITING.

If we consider this subject as outside our personal Religion, if it strikes us as trivial, unimportant or commonplace, that is just a proof that we have not realized its meaning and that we need its discipline. Let us think of the power and influence of letter-writing on others and on ourselves, of the dangers which belong to it, and then of the different kinds of letters we may be called upon to write, and how best to write them.

First think of the power of letter-writing as making or marring human happiness. If you have ever chanced to be at the General Post Office at the dispatch of the night Mails, it must have helped you to realize the

tremendous power of letter-writing, and how far and wide is the influence of the daily post. There are the masses of letters; how swiftly and deftly they will be delivered at their different destinations; what messages they are carrying; what changes in the world's history, what revolutions in home life, in personal history and careers, what joy and sorrow they are bearing to the four corners of the earth! We may picture one arriving at its destination; opened carelessly the shock it gives is shown at once by the blanched face, the white lips, the cry of distress; or we picture another opened by the hand of one who little thinks what gladness it is bringing; there is the sudden flush, the brightened eyes, the exclamation of surprise, or perhaps the tears (for joy sometimes saddens). Or we fancy some one watching for the post, longing for, yet afraid of, the footfall, trembling to take the letter—and then the news which ends in joy or sorrow the unbearable suspense.

Oh the wondrous power of the post! Oh the winged things we call letters! How strange is the power they have of making or marring human happiness. And the power lives. A letter lasts so much longer than spoken words; the latter make only a passing impression, in a few days they are forgotten; but the letter is there in your desk or drawer; it can be taken out, read again, thought over, pondered; it has an immortality which hardly anything else possesses. It may be an instrument of God, of Society, of cruelty or kindness, love or hate, sorrow or joy.

Its influence on the lives and characters of others; how careless we are of that! We are sceptical as to our power and influence; it is so convenient, and saves

so much trouble, to persuade ourselves that we have no influence ; it might be well if some people had none, but that is impossible, we cannot escape from it. While we live we must influence others for good or ill, for weal or woe. Unconsciously, imperceptibly, silently but surely, we exercise our influence. To realize this would have two effects : it would make us more careful of our words, and more careful of our letters. We speak thoughtlessly, carelessly, flippantly, without thinking of the effect our words produce ; and we often write unguardedly, mechanically, never stopping to consider the results ; but a letter is an immortal thing, and once launched on the sea of correspondence it drifts beyond control, beyond recall, perhaps even beyond the life of the individual to whom it is addressed. Do we ever think how much pain we may give to others by what we write ?

Letters have the power of giving pleasure to others. To please people is not the highest aim ; but it ranks higher than some of us think. " Even Christ pleased not Himself." He pleased the Father, but He pleased others too ; one aim of His Life was to make others happy. He told them of their sins, warned them, invited them, pleaded with them, rebuked them ; but not a few acts of His Life had just this aim : to give others pleasure.

Of course to a large number of people their letters can hardly be said to bring pleasure. Sometimes letters seem so overwhelming, there are such innumerable posts, the most worrying letters perhaps arrive at night. One advantage of a London Sunday is the peace it brings from the postman's visits. A man laden

with correspondence finds pleasure in escaping from it ; but with the vast number it is far from being so. There are thousands of people leading dull, quiet lives, to whom letters are a Godsend, who welcome the postman's visit as if it were that of an angel. Even the man who is weary of the many posts in town, when in some country retreat may not be unthankful for a letter. Some one in the dullness of a country town, the chronic invalid who has only an occasional visitor, the distant friend who has so few links with home, the little child who dances for joy at the sight of a letter "all to itself"—to all these your letters will not mean boredom ; they will mean pleasure, variety, brightness, companionship. Let us try to realize the joy the receiving of a letter may give to one who has very few of them.

We are far too much inclined to limit the scope and usefulness of Church Work. Religious work does not always imply hurry and fuss ; we may do as much good, perhaps more good, seated quietly at our writing-table. I know that the chatty letter is out of date, the old days of the "newsy" letter are past. We fire off half a dozen scrappy notes, possibly illegible, hardly repaying the labour of reading them ; a real talk on paper seems a thing of the past ; yet it would be a good piece of Church Work, a useful if severe Lenten discipline, if we were to resolve to write one or two letters which will be treats to other people, remembering that our labour will result in a glad relief to the monotony and dullness of their lives.

Letter-writing has the power of developing our own lives and characters. It is certainly a test of character. Some people go so far as to say that a man's hand-writ-

ing is the index of his character; due allowance must of course be made for pen, ink, and paper, time and health; still within limits it is a very good test—the slovenly, impetuous, undecided, retiring, aggressive, incautious characters all peep out. Much may be gathered from the beginning and ending of letters, and from the arrangement of them, and when one wanders aimlessly over pages of irrelevant matter, the real point of the correspondence being reserved for the postscript, it certainly gives us a clue to the character of the writer. But letter-writing influences character besides testing it. Some people pride themselves on not writing letters. To some of course it proves a real discipline, writing letters is very painful to them; they may shirk it, avoid it, or slur it over, but if they do, it means a tremendous loss to their own character.

Think what qualifications letter-writing demands. It needs effort. “I cannot bear writing”—that is generally the cry of the indolent and lazy, who are quite ready to sit before the fire with a book, who will accept everything you tell them about reading (which only implies receptivity not activity), but will not rouse themselves to the effort of writing.

It needs unselfishness. To write letters, unless with the object of getting something, means using the time for others which you might use for yourself. Sometimes we do not write the letters we ought, for instance to sick friends or brothers at school, or for the Foreign Mail, because there is something else more pleasant to do. A good correspondent generally means some one of an unselfish disposition, or who is selfish and trying to conquer it.

Courtesy—what a demand letter-writing makes on that. “Be courteous” is not an unnecessary injunction nowadays. Courtesy is out of fashion, yet the little courtesies of life are like the oil on the wheels which makes the express run smoothly. You can show interest in other people’s concerns, recognize kindness or hospitality, take care to remove a false impression, add the little words of appreciation which are so encouraging. Do not crowd your paper as if you had no room, or hurry your letters as if you had no time. A courteous letter does more good than you think. Between its lines your correspondents find the spirit, the conditions under which you wrote it.

Letter-writing also demands tact, “sanctified common sense,” that most uncommon thing. With some it is inherent, they are born tactful, it costs them no effort to say or write what is best and wisest. With some it has to be acquired; I am sure it can be, and it is most important that it should, for the tactless letter is the “little fire” that “kindleth”. It is well to pause before you write, to cultivate the habit of consideration for the feelings of others. Put yourself in their place and express what you have to say as kindly as possible. Tact means a habit of thoughtfulness, a sensitive conscience, forgetfulness of self and care for others. In these four ways letter-writing may discipline your own life and character.

There are two dangers on which we may touch before we go on to consider different kinds of letters. First the danger of neglect, that springs from indolence, selfishness, want of thought. Various excuses are offered for this: “Overwork”; “Want of time”—a



most elastic expression which may mean nothing; it is so easy to fill up one's time with duties one likes to the exclusion of those one dislikes; so let us make sure the excuse is true. "Want of health"—it may be very good for us to be obliged to write a letter when we are ill; to be taken out of ourselves, to lose the thought of our own troubles in those of others, is of the greatest benefit, as many an invalid has discovered. "No capacity for writing letters"—that is a very ordinary and convenient excuse, but one which we should never urge till we have made an honest effort to acquire the capacity.

There is also the danger of abuse. Some people have a perfect, and inconvenient, passion for letter-writing, they need no stimulus in that direction, but rush to their writing-tables and allow their pens to roam over countless pages, writing long involved letters, which, however, they always expect to be read and answered. Such a letter is not a help but an impediment, not a channel of kindness but an instrument of torture, not a means of expressing ideas but a sort of Rosamund's Bower in which we wander helplessly without a clue.

One abuse of letter-writing is sharp letters. They are so terribly easy to write, and we cannot unwrite them. It is easy for some quiet mild person to become almost ferocious on paper. It is a great satisfaction on receiving an unpleasant letter to rush and answer it; pulverize the writer, quote his own words in inverted commas, call in some one to hear what you have said, and send the letter hastily to the post. Afterwards you would probably give worlds to recall it. As we look back over our life, among the things we regret are the

sharp letters we wrote in haste and repented at leisure. If you have written a sharp letter it is a safe rule to keep it for twenty-four hours, and say your prayers at least once before sending it. It is a good plan to destroy all annoying letters without re-reading them, not to use them like a box of matches to re-kindle your anger, and to burn your answers before you send them. It is impossible to tell what misery, life-long estrangements, and bitter remorse would have been prevented if everybody burnt unpleasant letters as soon as they had read them and the answers before they were posted.

Then anonymous letters—they are very annoying, and yet we are ashamed to be annoyed by them. Archbishop Whately used to throw away unread any letters without signatures; but I cannot advise treating them in that way; it is not always from cowardice, or in order to be spiteful, that they are written. Some anonymous letters are most delightful and encouraging, and even among the unkind ones it is worth looking for a useful suggestion or a home truth.

Let us pass on to consider the different kinds of letters we may be called on to write. Business sometimes seems to lie apart from Religion; but a great deal of character appears in business letters. They should be courteous yet business-like; just and fair, straight to the point, with consideration for the time of others; methodical, carefully written, promptly answered and posted. All this calls for effort, self-denial, system, and kindness, which plays no small part in the formation of character.

Letters of congratulation are sometimes easy to write ;



you can throw your whole heart into them, your pen has behind it the warmest feelings and there is no need to measure your words. But it is not always so—for instance in the case of some post secured by jobbery and favouritism, or some foolish engagement, it is not easy to steer between Scylla and Charybdis. What course should you pursue? Pray for guidance in this matter as in everything else, weigh your words and give the best you can—not flattery, or approval if you do not approve, but generous hopes, advice, assurance of sympathy and remembrance; to do this you need not be either untruthful or unkind.

Few of us go far in life without having to write letters of sympathy, and very difficult they are; the more sympathy we feel the more we shrink from the poverty of our attempts to express it. We perhaps think our letter will be an intrusion, or we weigh our words so carefully that the heart is crushed out of it. We cannot tell what good letters of sympathy may not do in times of sorrow; the assurance that others are thinking, caring, sorrowing too, may prove salvation from despair, and is often the revelation of unsuspected friendship. "I never knew before how many friends I had." The most helpful are the simplest and the plainest, with no straining after beautiful thoughts. I know a man who, in his greatest sorrow, out of a mass of letters chose one which only said: "God help you; I have gone through it all myself". They should not be long enough to weary, or so short as to seem as if we grudged the time spent on them; not dwelling on the details of the sorrow, but rather on the mercies which remain, pointing out work to be done, calls to be

answered ; not indulging in platitudes or going beyond our own experience.

We should be tactful in writing letters of advice, and humble in receiving them. It is a safe rule to be very chary of offering advice ; and before asking for it we should make sure we want it and mean to act upon it. Some people seem to have a passion for asking for advice which they never intend to follow. In giving advice search your motives and beware of vanity, interference, grasping at power, or the assumption of infallibility. Think twice before you give, and thrice before you refuse to take advice.

Then there are letters to the absent ; to schoolboys or friends or relations abroad. There is one good rule in writing to schoolboys, the more letters the better. It is true they do not like long ones, but only a boy knows how it hurts if no one writes. It is the Mother's privilege but also the sister's duty ; her influence, although quite different from the Mother's, is a very real thing, and some drifting in after life may be due to the fact that her selfishness and sloth have given the boy the impression that no one but his Mother cares for him and thinks of him. No sister is living an ideal or indeed a worthy life who does not think it worth while to write a letter to her brother. But the letters must be readable, about what interests him, not only what interests ourselves ; details about home life, pets, people he knows, school games, touches of fun, all that makes the power of a schoolboy's letter. A concert programme or a new photograph for him to see will help to keep him in touch with all that is going on. When the Father does as much in this direction as

the Mother, home life closely approaches the ideal. And to those in the Regiment, at Sea, or in the Colonies, how precious are these links with the old home, which come as reminders to check them on the downward road, stimulate them in work, and cheer them in sickness. How is it possible to bring Religion into these letters? Do not force it. I remember a Mother who at the end of a letter brimful of interest, after her signature, wrote a text without any comment. That is often enough, that or a few words such as: "Do not forget your prayers," "Do not try and do without the strength of the Sacrament," "Remember to read your Bible".

I will close with the thought of the pattern letters we find in the Bible. Argumentative and reasoned, like the Epistle to the Romans; rebuking to the Corinthians; brotherly and fatherly advice to St. Timothy; the affectionate letters of St. John; the practical business-like Epistle of St. James—if we read and study these we shall gain fresh inspiration for our own, and make what Eugénie de Guérin says true: "I live between the folds of a sheet of paper".



XXIV.

ADDRESSES TO WEST LONDON CLERGY.



## XXIV.

### ADDRESSES TO WEST LONDON CLERGY.

#### I. LOSS OF FAITH AS THE CAUSE OF LUKEWARM RELIGION.

THE title of the subject on which I am asked to address you to-day, is "Loss of Faith as the Cause of Luke-warm Religion," and let me say at the outset that I am glad that the last words of the title are what they are—that "irreligion" is not the term employed to describe the existing state of things. For honestly and frankly, I do not believe in what is called "the irreligion of the day". It is incontrovertible, and hardly open to challenge, that we are passing through a reactionary phase; that the expressions of the religious instinct are not what they were, not what we feel we must expect them to be; that a wave of neglect of religious observances seems to be passing over all sections of society, though in varying degrees; that the old religious landmarks are being rapidly removed. But I do not for a moment believe that the phase is permanent; that it is more than superficial I entirely doubt. For, after all, the religious instincts of men are too deeply rooted and too strong to be lightly swept away by waves of passing indifference. They have ■

way of asserting themselves just when they seem to be extinguished; they leap into fresh life at the bidding of some great crisis. We, as Parish Priests, have often seen this in the case of some sudden sorrow, some shipwreck of life, some break-up of home, loss of means or disturbance of plans. I think, therefore, that we are going quite far enough if when we talk on this subject we speak simply of lukewarm Religion, and do not say the irreligion of the day—a pessimistic expression which tends to produce the very evil we deplore.

It is of one cause of that lukewarmness that we have to speak to-day. I say *one* cause, because the causes are many and various, and arise out of conditions that differ widely in differing conditions of life. How far is "loss of Faith" one of these causes—that is the question; and here I venture to demur to the wording, responsible though I be for it. I think weakness of faith, vagueness of belief, would better describe what we have now to contend with. It is not, I think, that the flame of faith is extinguished, but that it burns with such a feeble, flickering, colourless light; it is not unbelief, but vague belief, that is most prevalent to-day. I often think that if we could catechize our Sunday-morning congregations (and nothing more effective in his splendid service has Canon Body done, than when throughout Lent he gave catechetical instructions to a West End congregation of adults)—I often think that if we could do that with impunity, and were qualified to do it, we should be amazed at the extraordinary ignorance of the rudiments of the Faith—of even the most elementary truths of the Christian Creed—which our regular Churchgoers, and some even of our constant Com-



municants, would almost certainly display. The Faith is in a dangerous position, when a large number of people of the Church do not know what they believe or why they believe it.

“A weak Faith”—well, that is better than an abandoned, lost faith; but it is bad enough. It means that the house is built on the sand, and not founded on the rock, and that the least gust of heresy, whether new, or old dressed up to look like new, finding nothing to resist it, may scatter it to the winds.

What accounts for this weakened Faith?

1. The suspicion of Creeds, caused by the English antipathy to organized Religion. That is a specimen of our national inconsistency; for no one submits more readily and contentedly than the Englishman to system and method in common life. With machine-like regularity he accepts and obeys the laws and restrictions with which he finds himself surrounded; he is naturally a law-abiding and patient person, and he is the first to repudiate the notion that any kingdom can be administered in any other way. But he makes an exception with regard to the Kingdom of God. Restriction and rule, organization and plan—he will have none of them. He who lives his life by rule, who does everything he does because he holds by some unwritten creed, which he has never examined for himself, which he accepts on the authority and tradition of others—he, strangely enough, is the man who gravely tells you that Creeds are altogether superfluous things, that it matters very little after all what a man believes, it only matters how he lives. Until we can succeed in destroying the fallacy that there is such a divorce in Religion alone—for he does

not dream of it in anything else, he would think you insane if you suggested his conducting his business on any such principle—until we can demonstrate that while some people are better than their creeds, and a great many more are worse, still Creed and Conduct are two things essentially connected not in Religion only but in every department of the many-sided life of man; how can there be anything but a weak faith? The wonder is that there is any faith at all.

2. The disappearance of the conventional in Religion, as indeed in everything else. Lukewarm Religion is, I fancy, in the opinion of most of us, especially conspicuous in the matter of Worship. The neglect of Worship stares us in the face; we cannot explain it or account for it. We make efforts, frantic efforts, sometimes too frantic, by all sorts of attractions to overcome it. Even those who are happy in having crowded Churches, who have not yet felt the pressure of the motor and the week-end, if they stop to reckon the population of their Parish and alongside of that the accommodation of their Church, cannot fail to be struck by the enormous disproportion—by the fact that the big congregations represent but a fraction of the souls committed to their charge. And so the question arises: "Why do people neglect Worship; why have they lost hold upon the helps that a few years ago were almost necessarily used?" The answer is not, I think, so discouraging as the neglect appears to be.

The pressure of conventionality is gone; Religion has no longer behind it the idea of a label of social position, or local reputation, or "the right thing to do". The current of social custom is flowing now in an opposite

direction ; it requires as much courage to go to Church nowadays as it used to require to stop away. Church-going and the country visit are no longer naturally akin ; people worship more because they want to worship, and not because other people want them to, or because self-interest and the habits of their set leave them no alternative. I do not wish to paint things rose-coloured when they are black ; I know the real trial of this neglect of Worship to many a Parish Priest ; I recognize the loss of the acknowledgment of God that even Churchgoing from a poor motive implies. I am not sure, however, whether the smaller congregations, with the pressure of conventionality removed, may not represent more real religious earnestness, more spontaneous devotion, more genuine Worship, than the larger numbers driven in by force of habit in the days that are gone by. It is, of course, deplorable that the highest duty of which man is capable should be treated in any section of society as though it were an optional thing, as though the importance of a public and corporate recognition of God were an open question ; but it is well to look at the other side, well to remember that the quantity may be less but the quality more, well to guard ourselves against the idolatry of numbers which is the snare of London Churchmanship.

This reaction from traditionalism and conventional worship applies to matters of Faith. The influence of the doctrine of development is beginning to be felt ; the reaction from a decided religious conservatism means the swing of the pendulum to the opposite extreme. "The reaction of evolution in regard to historical religion is far-reaching and pronounced." Past beliefs

count for very little. That some belief has been the faith of the past is an argument not for but against its being the faith of the present. Stevenson's remark : " If I wanted a religion of my own, I could make a much better one than this Hebrew Christianity," describes the attitude of a larger number of people than one would suppose. " We have got past our childhood in Religion, we are grown-up people now, we want something better than we needed in our childhood days. We have outgrown our theological clothing." That is the spirit of the age, and unrestrained it is fatal to Faith. It ignores the adaptive power of the Christian Creed, the latent forces that are ready to come out to meet the modern needs. It is an easy step from that position to put aside Creeds and Church and Bible, as good enough for the necessities of those old days, but too old-fashioned, too narrow, too obsolete for the modern questions calling for an answer.

That is the spirit and temper of the age, and I am bound to say it is fostered unconsciously when the Church leans too much upon traditionalism, when she lingers too often and too long amongst the graves of the past, when she refuses to obey the voice, " Let the dead bury their dead "; but it can only lead in one direction, its ultimate and logical conclusion may be summed up in the sentence : " The God of our fathers is not our God, just because He is the God of our fathers ".

3. Next as a reason for weakened Faith leading to lukewarm life may be instanced an undisciplined spirit of enquiry. That the spirit of enquiry is abroad few of us are likely to deny ; that the Christian Church is the last to fear or discourage it we are perfectly assured ;

but the spirit of enquiry needs discipline and training, and that is just what so very few possess.

(a) The study, for instance, of comparative religion, to the untrained and undisciplined mind can easily come to mean that there is a universal religious sentiment, that the expressions of that sentiment in the religions of the world are very much of equal value, that definite Christian teaching is only one form of the religious spirit, with nothing about it supernatural or authoritative.

(b) With regard to the question of what is called the higher criticism, in spite of the enormous value of the service which it has rendered in flinging the light of increased knowledge upon inaccurate beliefs—bridging the gulf between Faith and science, throwing out into clearer prominence the great verities of the Bible as it leaves them untouched and unaltered—still for the untrained mind there is the danger of the hasty assumption that inaccuracy as to date or authorship seriously affects the main purpose of the Bible; the danger of the hasty acceptance of a critical conclusion which further investigation may correct, and often has corrected. It is, I venture to think, this spirit of enquiry without the safeguards of mental training and discipline, borrowing the unexamined conclusions of other people, which accounts for a good deal of the weakened faith of the present day.

4. If I may mention one more cause of weak Faith and lukewarm life, I would suggest this—The pressure of materialism, the paganization of modern life. “Modern civilization stands over against the influence of Christianity.” “The increasing unreality which seems to attach to the other world in an age intoxicated with this,” says one, “is the difficulty we

have to face just now." "The seen," said Mr. Gladstone, "is slowly gaining on the unseen." What would he say now? The passion for amusement in all classes of society, reaching a point that I doubt has ever been reached before; the idolatry of wealth; the substitution as a directing force in society of plutocracy for aristocracy; the possession of wealth without the faintest sense of responsibility for it; all mean the paganization of society—the fact that while materialism as a creed is as dead as Queen Anne, materialism as a mode of life largely holds the field. There are many people nowadays with "no use for religion"—totally unable to find any place for it in their crowded lives—and for whom God and the other life, if they exist at all, are hopelessly remote. Until some real protest can be made by Christian people—the protest I mean of simpler lives and more discrimination in amusements; until the Church and the world are more apart, evidently apart, in their methods and their spirit; we shall have more and more weak Religion springing from weak Faith.

I have left myself only a few moments in which to ask: If there is this connection between weakness of Faith and lukewarmness of life, what can you and I do?

We must teach more, even if we preach less. I believe the people are hungering for clear teaching which they very seldom get. The children receive it while they are children; the Confirmation candidates are given it; but the ordinary congregation hears little of it. There are plenty of exhortations, reiterated appeals, but there is strangely little clear and definite instruction. One of our West End Clergy preached a sermon on Baptism the other day, which produced ten adult Baptisms;

another announced a course of elementary instruction on Christian doctrine for those who had been Confirmed in the past few years, and the Church was crowded every week. The people are waiting to be taught. The Clergy must be trained and must train themselves to be teachers, and then they must teach. The people are ready, it is the teachers who are wanting.

In preaching and teaching alike, we must make less assumptions than we are accustomed to do. A large number of sermons—and instructions when they are given—lose force from assuming a level of knowledge which we have no right to assume. It has been said that our efforts in the Church of England are often wrecked on the rocks of assumption. Our Prayer Book assumes a level of devotion which not all our worshippers have reached; our sermons presuppose a level of knowledge which few of our hearers possess. You remember the saying of a certain headmaster about “the almost infinite capacity of an English schoolboy for not receiving information”? It is as well not to limit that to the English schoolboy or to assume that people have the knowledge we think they ought to have.

We must appeal more to the imagination and chivalry of those we want to win. We put our demands on too low a level, we are too timid of frightening away our people, we want to ask more in Faith and life and then we shall get more. We allow our people, our young people, to think that their Religion asks less of them than their school or university or profession asks, and as a result, they think less of their Religion. After all it is the appeal to heroism



chivalry, enterprise, self-sacrifice, which has made the best men that our country has produced. It is because we seem prepared to accept the second best in thought and intelligence, in life and work, that we so seldom get the best. We want to place our demands on Christian Faith and Christian life higher than we do. We want, in the name of the corporate life of the Church, to appeal to that corporate instinct that makes a regiment, a school, the live enthusiastic thing it is.

It is not apologetics the Church wants: there is too much of that, she has been on her defence too often and too long; it is attack, aggressive Faith and action, that will win her people back to her. Tell them that to live the Christian life is a big thing; tell them the Church is not content with a mechanical minimum of Worship and service, but calls for the best thought and life each one has to offer, and I am sure we shall get them; and as a weak Faith produces a weak life, so a strong brave life will make a stronger Faith. Above all let us live and work in hope. I believe this phase is a passing one, with no permanence about it; that it is only the dark night before the dawn; that soon (though some of us may not live to see it) will come a great awakening of Faith and effort, a great rebellion against the new religions, and they will fall as the false gods fell before the power of the Cross. If the Church of England is to have her part in the great awakening when it comes, then her teachers must teach; for when it comes, there will come with it a cry, a call for bread, which no hard dry stones of platitudes can satisfy—nothing but the Truth as it is in Jesus, the full proposition of the Faith of the Catholic Church.



## II. THE SECRET OF INEFFECTIVENESS

I WISH to speak to-day of the life and progress of the Church of England and the hindrances that retard them; and I begin with an axiom which we all accept, that the Church is more than a social organization or a philanthropic agency. That the real power of the Church is Spiritual power, that the position the Church claims is a Spiritual position, is a commonplace, a truism; but it is a truism that is not so universally accepted and acted upon, as to make it unnecessary to assert its truth; for in that truism lies the ground of any claims to recognition, respect, or authority, which we can advance on behalf of the Church.

If the Church is just a department of the Civil Service, for the purpose of dealing with Religion in a recognized and established form; if the Church is an institution primarily intended for the betterment of the social conditions of mankind; if the Church is a piece of ecclesiastical machinery representing efficiency of method in questions of Religion; then tried by every one of these standards the Church is a failure. She compares unfavourably with other departments of the State; she deals with social evils in a singularly imperfect and half-hearted fashion; and I am afraid we are bound in truth to add, that in many respects, financial and administrative—the arrangement of her finance, the training and support of her Clergy—in dealing with reforms and remedying abuses, she falls far below the ordinary standard of efficiency. But if the Church is a Spiritual society, having for her purpose the doing of Spiritual work—if all other aspects: position, history, wealth,

recognition by the State, are accidents, and this alone essential—then the real power of the Church is Spiritual power; on that she must rest her claims, by that she must be judged.

It is a truism which our Lord impressed at the outset on the pioneers of the Church. “Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high.” Then they were without power! They were without a special kind of power, and without it they were not equipped for His service. Is it surprising that this was so? They had lived and worked under the spell of His Presence; they had been with Him in His public Life; they had witnessed the events which were to become foundation stones of the temple of the Faith; they had seen His Glory, they were familiar with the principles, ideals, motives and moods, which made up His Life and Ministry; and yet Christ says they were not fit for His service. They lacked the essential power, they must wait till they received it; no energy, no effort could give the inspiration, the influence, needed for the work. It is startling to realize this. It means that the Church, that individual Ministers, may have knowledge, eloquence, energy, wisdom, talent; and yet not have “power”.

It might be thought that the completeness of the message would atone for the incompleteness of the messenger; but no, the work was too great, too deep, too high; the purpose was not to redirect or reform but to regenerate the world. That meant more than philanthropy, more than social progress, more than enlightenment; it meant Spiritual power. The real work of the Church was impossible without it; with it all the rest would naturally follow.

This is all so obvious that I should be ashamed to take up your time by repeating it, if it were not that it suggests a vital question: "Is not the need of the Church of England at this moment the need for that essential Spiritual power?" She has so much, this Church of ours—an ancient inheritance, inspiring traditions, recognized position, wealth of association, unparalleled activity, a full proportion of faith—but may not something be wanting, and that something, everything? All that we grieve over—the disproportion between our magnificent Faith and its meagre fruits, between the complicated machinery of Religion and its apparent results; our failure to subdue indifference, to awaken apathy, to recover lost ground, to save Sunday, to restore Worship—is this the secret of it? Is this why our efforts, ceaseless, varied, frantic, are beaten back in vain as they fling themselves against the dead wall of an indifference harder and more inflexible, the higher in the ranks of society we go? Is this the reason? We have the machinery, but the furnace burns low; we have the guns, but the ammunition is running short; we have the statics, but not the dynamics of our Faith. It is power, Spiritual power, that is wanting; and if that is wanting, everything is wanting.

If this is so, and I know not what other explanation there is of the weakness and the failures we all deplore, and which no sunny optimism can really disguise; then a tremendous question faces us: What accounts for this lack of power? What is hindering the flow of the Spiritual force on which the life and progress of the Church depend?

First and foremost—to go to the root of the matter,

before all questions of detail—surely the lack of corporate Prayer for Spiritual power is the greatest hindrance to a Church which depends upon Spiritual power. Individually, of course, that prayer is offered. From separate hearts, from groups of earnest people, the pleading for power goes up to God; but from the Church, as a Church, how seldom! One short prayer in the morning and evening Services, one sentence in one prayer of the Communion Office, represent the corporate pleading of the Church, that she may be “endued with power from on high”. And yet, surely it was when they prayed together in the Upper Chamber; when the first pioneers of the Church collectively waited, watched and pleaded, that the Spirit came upon them and they received power.

When the Clergy pray more together in Rural Deaneries, in Parishes; when a whole Diocese thinks it worth while, once a year, to pause in active work (as if prayer were not the most active of all work) and meet together to plead for an outpouring of Spiritual power upon it; when the Church prays more, even if, as a consequence, she talks and discusses less; then perhaps one of the greatest hindrances to her life and progress may, under God, be removed.

I would mention next—but as many of you may differ from me here, I put it in the form of a question: Are we quite sure that in the changed conditions of the alliance of Church and State, this alliance really conduces to a Spiritual conception of the Church, and is no hindrance to her life and progress? I say “changed conditions,” for they are seriously changed. In old days the Church was linked to a Christian State; Christian

not in name only, but in fact and in reality. There was no gulf of difference, on questions that for the Church are fundamental, between Church and State; no possibility of that happening which, though it has never happened yet, may happen at any time, namely, the appointment to the highest Spiritual offices being in the hands of one who is not a Christian, who does not believe in the Godhead of our Lord and Saviour, that Rock upon which the Christian Church is built. I do not want for a moment to invite you to a disestablishment discussion; but speaking as one who has worked for a dozen years in a disestablished Church, I venture to think that we ought at least to ask: Is the present position, with all it entails, conducive to the Spiritual power of the Church? Granted all that can be said on the other side, all that it means to the country, all that it means to the principle of the recognition of Religion, all the danger, if not impossibility, of any sudden reversal—granted all this—what does it mean to the Spiritual conception of the Church, to her life and progress, to her real power?

Again I would mention—and here I think I shall carry you with me—amongst the hindrances to the life and progress of the Church, the loss of touch with, the growing indifference to, Religion among what we call “the upper classes”. I think that loss of touch is beyond all question; the causes, many and various as they are, may be (let us hope they are) only transitory; but the fact is quite plain. In this great West London, where between Temple Bar and Uxbridge you may find every social grade, I have no hesitation in saying that the strength of the Church is in the lower

middle classes and the weakness of the Church in the upper circles of society.

How can this be anything but a hindrance to life and progress? "When nations perish, corruption begins at the top." The force of influence and example goes further, deeper, than we think. Ostentatious neglect of Services and Sacraments, inexcusable desecration of Sunday, moral laxity, indifference to all expression of Religion, combined though it be with so much that is kind and generous and good, cannot but have its effect, and it is having it. The people are ceasing to respect "Society;" but they are following its example. If we are to stop this leakage in the power of the Church, we must make more effort—more determined, brave, out-spoken effort—not in the pulpit, but in the drawing-room; not by easy rebuke of the working-man, but by the John Baptist reproof of the high and wealthy; we must try and win back the upper classes to the Church, to Christ.

I must now go a little more into detail. I feel sure that the loss of Spiritual power, so far as it exists, is due to causes which we could quite well weaken if we chose. *Over-pressure*—over-organization resulting in over-pressure, with the consequence of no time being left for thought and study and devotion—is I am certain one of them. It is my lot to interview the younger Clergy who come to work in West London, on their arrival—or at the time of their ordination, if ordained in the Diocese—and I cannot but be struck sometimes by the contrast: At first brightness, hopefulness, freshness and enthusiasm; and then at the end of a year or two, the fatigued and harassed look, the loss of the first freshness and



enthusiasm. I do not wonder at it when I hear how their days are spent, and how few hours they take, or are given, for strengthening their souls in silence. Over-activity, over-organization, multiplication of agencies, imitation of other people's methods—the whole Parish like Clapham Junction, new organizations constantly arriving, and old ones as constantly departing—storm and stress, feverish restlessness, the idea that one is not working unless one is doing something or going somewhere—there is no “strength in sitting still”.

And for those who are not “younger Clergy,” what does it mean? A serving of tables, a financial pressure crushing the physical strength, the mental alertness, the Spiritual power, out of many a devoted Minister of God. I could tell of one after another broken down by it—several of whom have now gone to their rest—but I cannot tell you how many have spiritually suffered because of it. And out of it—this world-cry for money penetrating into the sanctuary of ministerial life—come the many expedients, and varied devices, by which funds have to be raised; devices sometimes unworthy of the dignity of the Church of England, and still more unworthy of the great purpose for which the Ministry exists.

It is quite true that the characteristic of Church-work in these latter days, is its enormously widened scope. The charge against clerical life of being a narrow life, is a ludicrously inaccurate charge; there is no life so full, so human, so many-sided. Everything that concerns the lives of the people, concerns the Parish Priest to-day; but there is the inevitable danger, that the true purpose of the Ministry may be obscured. The parish accountant, the organizer of entertainments, the

writer of begging letters, throws into partial obscurity the Ambassador of Christ, the Minister of Reconciliation, the Steward of the Mysteries of God.

Forgive me if I speak strongly—I feel more strongly than I speak. I see so much of this; I am constantly imploring that less may be done, fewer organizations attempted, that no fresh ventures may be made—rather than that it be done at such a price; for the price must inevitably be not only the weakening of pastoral work; impoverishment of teaching; neglect of the training of and prayer with younger colleagues; the certainty of the growing secularization of the whole work and Parish; but still worse, the price is the Spiritual power of the Ministry. And the loss of the Spiritual power of one Minister of God, means the loss of Spiritual power in the Church herself—the greatest, most serious hindrance to the Church's life and progress.



XXV.

THE CALL OF LONDON.



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*(Bishop of London's Fund, Meeting at Chelsea Town Hall, 7 Nov., 1910.)*

It seems to be a superstition of the Bishop of London's Fund, that at each meeting for the Fund the advocacy of two laymen and two Bishops, one of them being the Bishop of London, is essential. Personally I feel that such necessity, if it be a necessity, is a grave reflection on the lay people of the Diocese—a reflection from which I am certain, that if they only realized it in that light, they would determine to get free. It ought to be enough to state that thousands are without the simple means of Grace; that every year the increase of population demands a dozen Churches, which we do not build; that while professing to be the National Church, we only provide accommodation for about one in every ten of the population, a condition of things which does not argue a deep faith in our Mission. I was reading the other day in a Church newspaper a rather scornful remark about the absurd over-seating of Nonconformist places of worship in Wales. It is bad to be over-seated, I wish I could think that none of our Churches were; but it is worse, when claiming to be the Church of the

nation, to be under-seated. Surely we should try to lift the reproach from the Church of England of assuming the Church attendance of only one-tenth of the population.

That it is not enough to state these facts, and facts like them, in the richest Church in the richest city in the world, is I think discreditable to the laity of London. We hear a good deal nowadays of the position of the laity in the system of the Church, of their rights and privileges; and I rejoice that we are hearing so much about it. I have not spent some of the best years of my life working in a disestablished Church, without learning the value of laymen in the councils of the Church. But there is the other side which does not receive equal attention, and is sometimes excluded altogether from consideration. The laity have duties as well as privileges, and while we emphasize, as we are bound to do, the fact that they have their place in the councils of the Church, we are also bound to insist that more generously, freely, and independently of the pleading of Bishops and Clergy, they should perform their duties. If there were more realization by the laity of their duties, there would be less need for the Bishop of London and others to make circular tours in the Diocese on behalf of the Bishop of London's Fund. As an instance, I ask you to think for a moment of the wealth of Mayfair, Belgravia, Kensington and Chelsea; and then of the £22,000 which was all that was given last year to provide for four millions of people.

Why is it so? I believe that what really lies behind the inadequate support given to the Bishop of London's Fund, is the extraordinary ignorance of what the Fund

is, what it needs, what it is doing, and seeking to do. London people are extraordinarily ignorant about London. I wonder how many people could pass a geographical examination on the subject. I once heard a great headmaster allude on a platform to the extraordinary capacity of the English schoolboy for not receiving information. I think we might extend that circle beyond the schoolboy; I have myself been talking about this subject for nearly ten years, until I am tired of the sound of my own voice; and still constantly some one innocently says: "Yes; but what *is* the Bishop of London's Fund?" I believe sufficiently in the Diocese of London to feel sure that if it only realized what the Fund is, it would give a very different answer to appeals for its enormous work. London is not an ungenerous place; Londoners respond promptly and freely when they are really touched, and that they should give so poorly to this Fund shows that there must be something wrong, some ignorance that still needs to be enlightened. I venture to think that they have never realized what the Fund is, and what it means to the religious life of London.

What is the Bishop of London's Fund?

(a) It is an attempt to meet, in the only way in which they can be permanently met, the grave problems of the Diocese. Of course it is possible to live in London and to ignore its problems; but let any one go by motor car, or tram, or train, into the outlying districts where rows of little houses are covering the green fields; let him glance at the L.C.C. Statistical Report; and the problem will become plain, at least he will feel something of "the awfulness of London". Frantic efforts,

splendid efforts, are being made to meet it; County Councils, Borough Councils, private enterprise, philanthropic efforts, are jostling each other; schools, work-houses, model dwellings, are springing up; but the problem remains unsolved. Social differences, crime and pauperism, neglected childhood and corrupted youth continue. Something is wanted behind all this effort, to do what it cannot do. What is needed is character, corporate character, which is just the sum of individual characters; without that, all will be futile, all efforts will be beaten back. It is quite possible to have better houses and no better people to live in them; to inaugurate temperance reforms which only leave the house "empty, swept and garnished". No social improvements in themselves, unassisted and unsupported, will reach the character of the people, Religion alone can supply what is wanting; and the power of the Religion which "The Bishop of London's Fund for supplying the Spiritual Needs of the Diocese" represents, is the only positive and permanent solution of the problems of London.

(b) It helps to fill a gap in the lives of the people. The people, whatever may appear to be the case, want Religion, they expect it, they are waiting for it, some are morally and spiritually dying for lack of it. I have no faith in the cry "the irreligion of the present day"; certainly not among those masses for whom the Bishop of London's Fund makes provision. The common people still hear Christ gladly. You may give them everything else: Education, houses, employment, pensions; but when all other efforts are exhausted, a great gap remains. They want something to fill it and only one thing can do it. If you contrast one London dis-

trict where everything is provided for the material needs of the people, but there is no Church; with another where, in addition to all that, a Church stands in the midst of the little houses; you will be amazed at the difference in the very aspect of the people, the bright look, the smile on the faces of the children if you ask the way to the Church or mention the name of the Clergyman. They do want and appreciate Religion, and the Bishop of London's Fund fills a gap in their lives when, planting a Church and Clergy among them, it reminds them of "the one thing needful". And in doing that, the Church vindicates her claim to be the National Church, and sweeps away the reproach of claiming a title which is undeserved. For what is the National Church? It has been defined as "not necessarily the Church numerically the strongest, but the one which best represents and satisfies the religious ideals and aspirations of the national life". But other religious bodies do that; so I would add: "The Church that creates religious aspirations and then satisfies them". Is the Church doing that? I maintain that the Bishop of London's Fund answers the question; every time she plants a Church or a Hall or an Evangelistic agent among the people she is doing those two things—creating the highest aspirations, and then meeting and satisfying them.

(c) It is a splendid stimulus to local effort. In that I think its value largely consists. It is a Provident Fund in the sense that it is far-seeing and looks ahead; it does not wait for the houses to be built before securing sites for Churches. The sites are constantly waiting for the houses. But it is provident in another sense; it

is not a charitable agency giving doles, but it helps people by teaching them to help themselves. Often a Clergyman comes to me and says: "I must build a Church or a Hall, but I have no money. My Parish is not like others"—in my experience no one's Parish is—"I know that the Bishop of London's Fund gives grants; will it not do more in this case, and bear the whole cost of building?" And the answer is: "No, a thousand times no; not if it had the money!" The wisdom of this course is being continually evidenced. The man dangles the grant before the eyes of his people, and you would hardly realize how it stirs them to do their part. Expedients for raising money come rolling in, and at last the Church is built, and when it is consecrated it is their own in a sense which a Church built by the cheque of a millionaire could never be.

The other afternoon I dedicated a Parish Hall in the quaintest little hamlet in Middlesex, with a population of about a thousand people. The Parish Church is two miles away, and Services used to be held in a small room which would only hold twenty people. The C.E.M.S. working men decided that this state of things could not be allowed to go on. "We've got to do this job," they said. So they prayed together for some time before they worked. Then they came over to see me at Hayes, and said they wanted something to give them a start. The Bishop of London's Fund answered by giving them a grant, for which they were most grateful. They worked with zeal and energy, and when the Hall, for which they had laboured with their prayers, their money, and the work of their hands, was dedicated, we opened it without one farthing of debt.



Does not a Fund which succeeds in doing this, deserve more support than we are giving it? The question ought to stir us to ask: What can I personally do? What am I doing? Is my name on the list of subscribers; or if I prefer to give through the channel of the Offertory, am I satisfied in my own heart and conscience with what I am giving? Am I confident that I am doing the utmost that I can, worthily to help this Fund, which in the heart of the Empire is trying valiantly, with very inadequate resources, to meet the needs and claims of the greatest Diocese in the world?



XXVI.

THE CALL OF THE WORLD.



## XXVI.

### THE CALL OF THE WORLD.

(*C.M.S. Annual Meeting, 2 May, 1911.*)

“The Vision of the Response of the Church to the Needs of the World.”

“VISIONS and tasks” is our subject this morning and, after all, that is life in its completest sense. The true life is visions and tasks; not separate from each other, not apart from each other, but closely associated and inseparably connected, the vision inspiring the task and the task resulting from the vision. Unfortunately we ourselves do separate them, to the loss and mutilation of the life God has given us to lead. There is the life of visions without tasks—the life of the dreamer, the visionary, the theoretical, the imaginative man, who sees ideals, and pictures the magnificent possibilities of things; but who never comes down to face the tasks by which alone those ideals can be realized. On the other hand there is the life of tasks without visions—there is plenty of that in our age. I fear that it is the description of much of our life to-day, and sometimes I dread lest it should also become the description of the life of the Church. There never was a period, perhaps, of more exuberant vitality, ceaseless activity, multiplied

movements and organizations, schemes and plans jostling each other, crowding each other, with feverish haste ; but if we have no visions, it is all hard, cold, uninspiring, mechanical—we are living an imperfect life.

The ideal life means both ; in the combination of the two, the true life is found. How beautifully this is illustrated in the Life of our Lord ; what was His Life but visions and tasks ? Now it was the vision of the downfall of the kingdom of evil : “ I saw Satan as lightning fall from Heaven ; ” and then immediately the task, to summon the whole world to Himself, by which method alone could the triumph be complete. Again on the Mount of Glory there was the vision which dazzled the Disciples and uplifted and transfigured Himself ; and then instantly the task—the scene in the valley, the despairing Disciples, the grief-stricken parents, the paralysed child. Once more in the Garden of Gethsemane, He had the vision of angels hurrying to His relief while the arresting grip was upon His wrists ; and the next moment : “ Let us go forth,” the facing of the task on which the whole world’s salvation depended. If you and I are living the Christ life, both these experiences must be ours—life’s visions and life’s tasks. Is it different with Church life ; of what else can it consist ?

You have just heard of the “ Vision of Need ”—the cry of the world, largely unconscious of its needs, swelling in intensity, deepening and growing in pathos, ever widening its limits—coming from East and West in such different tones and with such different meanings : “ Come over and help us ”. You have heard the cry, the vision of the need has been before you ; and now quick upon it—for it must come quickly, so imperious

and appealing is the call of need, the opportunity is so vast—is the task, the response. It is just dimly dawning upon us what the task is to be, how the response is to come. It is bad to see no visions—then the people perish and work dies down—but it is worse to see them and not respond to them. It was wonderful to have seen that light and heard that appealing Voice by the roadside ; but it would have shadowed all St. Paul's life with an intolerable regret, if he had not been able to look back upon it and say : “ I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision ”. Through you and me, our contribution of prayer, interest, and alms, may the Church be able to look up to our Lord and say : “ Those that Thou gavest me have I kept ; I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision ”. So it must be with us. We cannot hear the cry from far off ; we cannot look at the picture of the waiting world stretching out its hands in the darkness, hardly knowing what it wants—we know it wants Christ—we cannot see that vision and hear that cry, and yet be as if we had never heard or seen. It is the responsibility of the vision which makes the urgent duty of the task. “ If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.” If we had not had revealed to us the vision of the need, there would not lie heavy on our hearts the responsibility of the answer. The response cannot be less urgent than the call.

What is the task that follows on the vision ? The answer is itself a vision. The response of the Church, what do we seem to see it in our quiet moments to be, as with the call sounding in our ears—the call of the nations, ay more, the call of Christ speaking through the nations—we look out with the eyes of faith into the

future? Do we picture to ourselves the whole Church—not some here and some there, not a great Society here or a great Society there—but the whole Church sinking its differences, hushing its shibboleths, banishing its rivalries, finding all its wretched controversies dwarfed by the great dominating purpose, that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ? Do we see the whole Church steeped in the missionary spirit; fired with missionary enthusiasm; possessed with the missionary idea; all that is best and ablest in English life pouring itself out into missionary enterprise; going forward with one single aim—Christ and His Kingdom!

Do we picture the final disappearance of that fast-dying fallacy, that interest in Missions is an appendix to the Christian life, rather than its vital moving spirit and force? Do we dream of the time when through the whole body of the Christian Church the conviction shall spread and deepen, that the only principle of progress is the missionary principle, that the living thing only lives as it flings out life? Neither the Church—however great her numbers, however many and gorgeous her buildings, however moving her Services; whatever inspiring traditions and splendid history she has behind her; nor the man—however great his fervour and beautiful his visions may be; can live without flinging out life.

Do we dream of the time—and it is not an Utopian dream, but a magnificent reality—when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the



sea ; when all nations shall be as crowns upon His brow ; ay, and when it shall no longer be that the peoples of the earth receive only, but that they give—when each nation brings its own contribution of life and character, talent and capacity, truth and service, and lays it at His feet ; when the vision of the Revelations is fulfilled and all nations and all men bring their crowns—that is to say their completest and their best—and cast them down before Him ? Then we shall realize what we find it so hard to realize now, not only that the nations of the world want Christ, but that Christ wants them, for the satisfaction of the travail of His Soul, for the perfection of His reign, and to complete the harmony of the music that surges round His throne. That tremendous truth lies at the heart of all missionary effort, and silences those crude criticisms which tell us we had better leave the heathen alone. Over against them stands the great inspiring truth of Missions, that Christ wants the nations as surely as the nations want Christ.

Is that the vision of the response ? How is it to come ?

It will come through knowledge ; as these needs of the world, we have been hearing about, open out before us ; as the calls sound clearer, louder, more insistent, more pathetic ; as the heavenly vision finds our eyes less holden, our faith less dim ; as the open doors swing back more visibly that the chariots of the King of Glory may enter in. It will come as the conviction grows and deepens, that between Missions at home and Missions abroad there is no rivalry, no conflict of interest or aims or men ; that it is the missionary spirit which lies at the heart of the Gospel of Christ, large enough, as it is, to

include both and make each the receiver even as each is the giver.

It will come through gratitude surely, as the sense not merely of responsibility for but of obligation to missionary effort, lies more heavily on the heart of the Church; when we think not so much of what missionary enterprise owes to the Church, as of what the Church owes to missionary enterprise, as the debt piles up and grows with every new venture, every fresh departure. Surely we owe a debt of gratitude to Missions for their evidential value, their witness to the power of the Gospel. It may seem strange that in this twentieth century in Christian England, we should need a witness to the power of the Gospel; but who can say that we do not want it? With the power that belongs to all consecrated effort at home and abroad, the assurance comes like new life to us—tired and jaded in the struggle, wondering sometimes if we can ever penetrate that stone wall of indifference, against which all our efforts seem to beat in vain—the assurance of what can be done, and is being done, in the Name of Christ, and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It comes to cheer and invigorate us, with a witness to the power of the Gospel under all conditions, in all circumstances, in face of all difficulties. And you and I, ashamed of ourselves, our want of faith and courage, are enabled to say: “I am not ashamed”—how can I be in view of the evidential value of Missions?—“of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation”.

We owe a debt of gratitude for those personalities, some gathered to their rest and some still in the thick of the struggle, who—ever since the great missionary, St.

Paul, took the Cross over the sea as he obeyed the strange summons of the vision of the night, down the long line of martyrs who shone as lights in the darkness, and counted their lives as dross—have given themselves to Foreign Missions. They deepen our sympathy, enlarge our vision, restore our ideals, and send us to our knees to thank God, and to our feet to sing the *Te Deum*, for God has helped them to help the Gospel to be true to itself.

There is one way more, and the greatest of all, through which the response will come. It is through a re-consecration of the Church, in no other way, no less a way—through a Baptism of Fire, through a great outpouring of the Spirit of Power. This is the vision of the future, this is how the response will come. We believe in the need of consecration for our individual selves; do we equally believe in it for the Church at large? Only through a re-consecration of the whole Church—Bishops, Clergy, and people—can the response really come. How can it be otherwise? For, after all, the Spiritual force of Missions must come from the sparks that scatter from the central fire, and only a Spiritual Church can send out Spiritual men. The whole thing finds its secret there at the very heart of the life of the Church. The real method of her response to the needs of the world is the re-consecration of the Church to the service of God.

I submit to you that it is our ineffectiveness both at home and abroad, that troubles and surprises us, and lies heavy on our hearts. It sometimes seems to be clogging the wheels of the chariot which moves so slowly while gates are open which may any day be closed. We are so ineffective. Do you remember how Christ flashed

the thought of their ineffectiveness upon His Disciples, and told them why they were not equipped for His service? "Ye shall receive Power." Then they were without power, the special kind of power which was essential to their task. It must have come as a shock of surprise—this revelation of their ineffectiveness. They had lived and worked under the spell of His Presence, they had been with Him in close companionship, they had seen His miracles, they drank in His teaching; and yet He tells them they had not power, and that there was only one way in which they could get it. It was startling to them, and it is startling still; for it means that a Church, a ministry, a people, may have knowledge, energy, eloquence, interest; and yet may not have power, and will not have power, until the Holy Ghost is come upon them.

Is that not one essential to the fulfilment of the Vision of Response? Is it not what, just now, we are feeling the want of in our own Church of England? She has so much, this Church of England, ancient inheritance, noble traditions, inspiring memories, unparalleled activity, wonderful personalities, a full Gospel message. Why then are we so ineffective; why do we make so little way against the great mass of coldness and indifference? What is it that we want, in order to subdue indifference, awaken apathy, save Sunday, restore Worship, win back the upper classes who seem to be drifting away from Christ? We do not want more activity; we want more of the Holy Ghost, another Pentecost, a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God. We want to take home to our hearts the inspiring promise, which is as true for us, if we will

claim it, as it was for the Disciples : “ Ye shall receive power ”—not as you work only, but as you wait, and as you pray—“ after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ”.

My friends, that is the road along which the response will come—a great act of re-consecration of the whole Church. The response of the Church to the call of the nations for Christ, is delayed for want of Spiritual power which God in His Love is waiting to bestow when we claim it and ask for it. Let us ask for it more often and more publicly. It is surely sad, that in our public Services there should not be more than one short prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. When the Clergy refuse, and to my mind they are not sufficiently refusing, to be tempted or drawn away from the main and highest purpose of their Ministry, by those side calls and claims, which, delightfully interesting and immensely important as they are, are as nothing compared with its essential purpose ; when the people are a consecrated people, devoting their substance, their sons, perhaps themselves, to the highest life that a man can live ; then the vision of the response will no longer be a vision, but a glorious reality. Then from end to end of the world the cry will sound with sweetness in the ears of the Victorious Christ, because it will sound from a great multitude of nations, languages, and tongues : “ Alleluia. The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ; the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.”



XXVII.

TEMPERANCE AND NATIONAL EFFICIENCY.





## XXVII.

### TEMPERANCE AND NATIONAL EFFICIENCY.

*(Presidential Address, Imperial Temperance Conference, 14th June, 1911.)*

LIFE has been described as consisting in its completeness of ideals and methods inseparably combined ; and what is true of life is true of work, true of every movement which has for its aim the betterment of men and the uplifting of human effort to its highest level of purpose. I submit to you that it is true of the work of the Temperance Reformer. It is easy to forget this, easy to lose sight of and miss the ideal, to go toiling on, embittered by the slowness of results, impatient of criticism and of argument, with a narrow and narrowing outlook, and even an irritability born of despair. It is possible to do all this and to know nothing of the vision and ideal which alone can uplift and inspire and give force to our work.

We meet here to-day as workers in a common cause, and as representatives of other workers. You come from different quarters of the Empire, out of different conditions and contrasted circumstances, from difficulties as real as those at home, though differing in some ways from ours and, as we may think, less difficult

than ours. We look across the seas to where work for the welfare of the people is being done without those prejudices, preconceived opinions and precedents, which hamper us at home. Our interests may lie in some measure apart, but a common ideal makes us one and links us together in a great brotherhood marching by different paths to the final goal, the victory of the cause which lies so near our hearts. What is that purpose which unites us and makes us friends at once, though we have never met before and may never meet again? It is to establish more clearly and decisively before the whole Empire "the relationship of Temperance and all that it stands for to Imperial progress and efficiency".

I attribute the honour paid to me—who have been for many years a humble worker in the Temperance movement, of being asked to preside at such a time in the history of the Nation, over a Conference not less important because it is small—to the desire to emphasize the fact that it is to individual effort chiefly and supremely that the progress of the Temperance movement has owed itself in the past and will owe itself in the future. After all the permanent solution of the Temperance problem is to teach the individual man and woman, boy and girl, the great lesson of self-control and personal service, and this involves personal effort and influence. Therefore the history of the Temperance movement is largely the history of interesting personalities, of men whose names outside the circle of Temperance Reform count for little, but who represent to us that power of personal influence and personal example which is the surest guarantee of success. Year by year the procession of workers sweeps along, familiar figures drop out of the

ranks. They pass, but their works follow them, and the changed condition of the Temperance question to-day stands as a witness to the value of personal conviction and individual effort, on which eventually every movement must rely.

It is not unusual nowadays to hear it said by those who never lifted a finger to help, and have even done their best to thwart, the movement, that in this country intemperance is disappearing, that because the drink bill is lessening the progress of Temperance is remarkable, its future secure. Curiously enough, with strange forgetfulness of history and small measure of justice, that progress is assigned to other causes than the patient labour of those who have gone before. Still more strangely, this success is used as an argument for us to hold our hands, abate our demands, and rest content in the golden age of Temperance which has dawned. That is an optimistic, conveniently optimistic, view; but it is held in defiance of facts. It is the work of the past and the men of the past—it is the strong words of which we hear so much complaint from those who in political controversy are not accustomed to mince their words—the strong words of denunciation, which, although they do not appeal to me, have served their purpose as a red flag warning of danger. It was those men and their work that sowed the seed of which we are beginning to reap the harvest. All honour to them! “Their works do follow them.”

Will you allow me, as a humble worker following far off in the footsteps of the leaders of the past, to ask you to consider first the Ideals of the Temperance Reformer, and then the Methods of Temperance Reform.

The vision of the future— what is it? What ought it to be? When we go past all that is so familiar to us, legislative demands, convincing statistics, hygienic arguments, pathetic pictures; at what are we aiming? For what do we hope? What goal of Temperance Reform shines for us far away, perhaps at a distance of time that some of us may not be permitted to reach? What is our ideal, our vision?

Is it that in the future—and there are signs and symptoms that the time is coming already—a great conviction will possess the race, penetrating to the farthest corners of the vast dominions of the King you have come home to honour, finding indeed its inspiration and strength in those distant places where the Flag waves over different conditions but the same people—the conviction that Imperial greatness means Imperial efficiency, and that intemperance and efficiency are contradictory terms? No shouting of war songs, no passionate patriotism, no loud and exaggerated language, no artificially worked-up enthusiasm, can atone for the want of character, the want of that self-restraint and self-control on which character depends, and in which national greatness so largely consists. So long as intemperance lives among us, and temptations to intemperance surround us, for the gain of the few and the ruin of the many, so long the ideal of national efficiency, involving as it must national righteousness, never can be realized. Is that not the meaning of the Conference called here by the National Temperance League, which represents not only a powerful force but the brain and Intelligence Department of Temperance Reform, to say with united voice that Imperialism and

intemperance are incompatible, that national greatness and a large national drink bill cannot permanently co-exist?

Is it a vision of the State keeping or recovering control over a dangerous monopoly, which can only mean, not that the few suffer for the many—that is the law of life—but that the many suffer for the few, that the interests of a trade are allowed to hinder the best and highest interests of the people? Do we dream of a time when, with what seems to us elementary fairness, the locality shall be free to determine whether, and how far, within its borders a great peril should be allowed to exist; when the whole question is regarded as a people's question and with the people the decision is permitted to rest? Is it that realizing the complexity of the Temperance problem and its close connection with the other problems that affect us—the housing of the people, the training of the children, the conditions of labour, the relief of the poor, the recovery of the fallen; all closely intertwined, sometimes as cause and sometimes as effect—one day all social reformers, refusing to isolate their own special problem, should feel it impossible to stand aloof from dealing with that great parent source of evil which lies deep at the heart of all social distress? There is an Eastern fable of an evil spirit which appeared to a man and gave him the choice of committing one of five crimes. He chose intemperance, and while intoxicated committed the other four. I need not point the parable. The claim of the Temperance movement on all departments of social reform is obvious.

Is it possible that our vision soars higher than this? Dare we anticipate a day—it may be dawning now—

when all the Christian forces of the Empire, sinking the differences which part them, realizing the common foe which threatens them, may combine on a platform common to all, for a purpose that concerns them all—to attack an evil reaching deep down to the foundations of the material, moral, intellectual and religious life of the multitudes? When that day comes a tremendous responsibility will rest on any who allow a narrow spirit to mar or delay the movement; for against the combined forces of the Empire, not even that powerful evil would be able to stand.

Is there any wider vision than that? It would seem impossible to imagine anything more wide, and yet our Sovereign rules over many millions of non-Christian people—are they to lie outside the range of the work of Temperance Reform? It is our own guilty greed, our ships not only carrying missionaries but carrying gin, which has made it impossible that these people should stand outside it; which has made the Temperance question of vital interest to these native races; which demands the reparation of Temperance effort for the wrong we have done them.

The wider vision dawns, the Imperial vision, when for all who believe in Imperialism not as a mere phrase but as a living force and a terribly responsible fact, the Temperance movement will become an Imperial claim. When we all realize how intemperance defies civilization and Religion, some of us working on more advanced lines than others, but none holding aloof or contemptuously indifferent, there will be a National Imperial movement before which this thing, which has reigned too long side

by side with the British Flag, will fall as Dagon fell before the Ark of God.

Such, I submit, are some of the visions and ideals of the Temperance Reformer. They may be condemned as Utopian, visionary, impossible; and yet I dare to say that not so very many years ago it would have been deemed impossible to summon busy men: statesmen, scientists, educationalists, leaders and teachers of men, to such a Conference as this to give their time to discussing this question. "Utopian, impossible"—the only answer to the cry is in words which stand eternally true: "With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible". With God, and the cause of God, it is magnificently possible.

Let me say something as to the methods through and by which these ideals may be realized. First and foremost *knowledge*, leading to a deepening, widening, more scientific treatment of the Temperance problem. It is an undoubted fact that over the methods of the advocacy of Temperance principles a great change has come. The principles themselves have undergone no change since, hardly more than a century ago, they were first enunciated; but the mode of their presentation has extraordinarily altered, and it is so difficult to persuade people that it is possible to combine changed methods with unchanging principles. It is no longer against drunkenness only, but against alcohol as the cause of drunkenness, that our efforts are directed, and with the new objective new methods have sprung up. The signing of a pledge no longer exhausts the aims of the Temperance Reformer; it is with alcohol, its sale and



use, and the conditions of its use and sale, that we are concerned to-day. A change has swept over the scope and manner of Temperance oratory. We recall with a smile the declamatory utterances, the fierce denunciations, the pathetic pictures, the statistical gymnastics, the personal experiences, the economical arguments of the past; but we recognize that they did their work, they had a certain duty to perform and effectively they performed it—it would be good if we did ours as well. Nothing else, nothing different, could have dealt with what they had to face. They drew attention, as no milder methods could have done, to their cause; they may have alienated some, but they won more, and they made a deep impression, at the cost of the opposition of a drink-loving people, on our not too impressionable race. But those days are gone; with an altered purpose, a heightened ideal, a wider vision, come new methods and fresh tasks.

Social problems can no longer be dealt with by sentiment alone, they must be met on the sounder ground of scientific research. The evolution of the thinker demands a different presentation of the Temperance problem. Intelligent appreciation of the soundness of an argument calls for more than assertion, it demands proof. It is no longer enough to thrill Temperance audiences with the amount of space the Public Houses in the kingdom would cover if they were spread out in a line. The spirit of research is abroad; the moral argument has not, we hope, disappeared, but it shares the ground with those material, social, economic, hygienic aspects of the question which are surely not to be despised. The medical profession, in spite of sporadic



short-lived outbursts on the other side, is slowly but surely bringing the force of its great knowledge and influence to bear on what we hold to be the side of truth and righteousness. It was my good fortune last year to address some hundreds of medical men on the Temperance question, and I shall never forget the serious and responsible tone of that gathering as its members listened to the words of one who, with regard to that subject, might more suitably have sat at the feet of any one of them.

In a word then, our methods have altered but our principles stand. We have grown not less convinced, but more patient. We are less drastic in our apportionment of blame, the Publican is no longer the scapegoat for the sins of others, we realize that personal responsibility rests on more shoulders than one. Temperance Reform is losing nothing of its old zeal and enthusiasm, but it repudiates a zeal without knowledge. It is not so much the orator and man of words that we need, it is the man of knowledge, thought, study, and research. If we are to win the Empire to Temperance principles, if we are to have legislation, not preceding (and because preceding, under sentence of death), not following far behind, but abreast of public opinion—we must have more knowledge, we must teach more even if we appeal less.

Let us begin with ourselves. We must know more, we must be willing to know more, we must keep that open mind so essential to the acquisition of any knowledge, and that makes the acquisition of knowledge a discipline and training of character. We must welcome conclusions, if sound, even if they are not what we

want them to be. The question for us is not whether they are palatable but whether they are true; not whether they fit in with our views, our cherished convictions and reiterated statements, the articles of our Temperance Creed, but whether they come with the authority of scientific knowledge and research. But while saying this I plead for more patience and slowness in the publication of results. Impatience is always fatal to good work, to intellectual progress and investigation and the acquisition of knowledge. "He that believeth shall not make haste," like many other words of the great Book is of the widest application; for patience means a deep sense of the responsibility implied by knowledge—a responsibility so serious and so far-reaching, that a man is bound to hesitate before handing on to others what he may not have thoroughly sifted himself.

It is not for me to tread on the controversial ground on which distinguished antagonists have crossed swords of late, I would only venture to plead for a greater sense of responsibility in the publication of results, however honestly arrived at, with omissions as to the data on which the conclusions are based, that in the opinion of distinguished experts vitiate the results that are proclaimed to the world. It is a dangerous thing to publish conclusions of an investigation conducted in a limited area and with a strange disregard of important distinctions, which affect the life of the whole community and tend to encourage the notion that intemperance has no far-reaching consequences and no effect on the future of the race. We welcome truth from whatever source it comes. The worst service we can render any cause

is to resent conclusions because they run counter to statements we are accustomed to make ; but we plead for delay, for revision, for searching criticism, ere they are proclaimed as having a finality which few conclusions in this world can claim to possess. Is it too much to hope that out of a controversy like this may emerge a combined effort of Imperial scope, led by men who want not merely to air their own views, but to discover the truth, and who are prepared when they see the light, at any cost, to follow it.

Knowledge is the first method on which we rely and *legislative effort* is the second. We cannot reverse the order. We can try to do so ; we can pass laws in advance of or defiance of knowledge ; they will die a natural death and their corpses will encumber the statute book of this realm, already sufficiently encumbered. If anything could have revealed the lack of knowledge on this question of Temperance Reform, the licensing controversy of two years ago would have effectually done so. The wildest utterances of the wildest enthusiast, the most violent denunciations that have ever shaken the Temperance platform, pale before the utterances of opponents of a measure which, whatever its faults and failings, aimed at the good of the masses of the people. That opposition revealed an astounding ignorance of the history and principles of the licensing laws of this country. The new gospel "That the amount of drunkenness bears no relation to the amount of facilities for drinking" was from the point of view of common sense astonishing enough, but it was urged without any apparent idea that the argument went too far and cut at the root of any licensing system

at all. For, after all, the rationale of a licensing system, the sole justification for the restriction of one trade more than another, is the axiom that it is a dangerous trade, dangerous to the individual, dangerous to the community, and therefore to be limited in its chances of doing harm. If drunkenness bears no relation to the opportunities for drink, then restriction becomes an absurdity, an injustice, and free sale emerges triumphantly from the discussion.

Legislation must be based on knowledge, and next time any such attempt is made, as surely under new conditions it must soon be made, it must find a larger body of informed opinion ready for it. The battle must be fought, not on the ground of pecuniary loss to the large body of investors, who have been allowed to shut out of sight the vaster crowd of innocent sufferers, but on knowledge, scientific conclusions carefully thought out and sifted. When that is so, Temperance Reformers need have no fear of the result. Our legislative goal is a simple one—you in other parts of the Empire have tried it already—we call on the State to trust the people. For, after all, it is the people's question; the drink bill means loss to those who pay for the results it entails, but the burden of suffering falls on the people, they are the victims. The landlord can wave Public Houses off his property, the West End householder can guard against a drinking place being dumped down at the corner of his Square; but the dweller in the back street has no redress, no remedy, no voice. The legislation we ask for claims that the will of the people should be felt, the voice of the people heard. We be-

lieve that, in this matter, the voice of the people will be a faint echo of the voice of God.

The last method, on which I have only left myself time to say a few words, is the cultivation of a *public* and *patriotic* spirit. We can do nothing without that. No appeal to selfish interests, no arguments for thrift, no warnings about pauperism and crime, will do what a larger view of the question will effect for those who love their country, for whom Imperialism and patriotism are more than cries. We are on the eve of an outburst of loyalty and patriotism, surrounded by illustrations of our boasted Imperialism. Is it to be more than a mere frenzy of excitement, more than the sentiment, beautiful as it is, that gathers round the Throne? If so, must it not show itself in a greater sense of responsibility for the good of the nation, and set itself against the giant evil under the glittering surface of society, which almost makes itself heard above the roar of the thousands in the streets? Then there must grow and strengthen throughout the Empire, which means so much to the whole world, a determination to sweep away a wrong which has so long blighted the life of the people, and before which civilization is helpless and even Religion seems powerless. With that resolve—a Coronation resolve, for it will crown all our Imperial aspirations with the glory of its hope—we shall go forward with the blessing of God to become an increasingly efficient, because increasingly sober, race.

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